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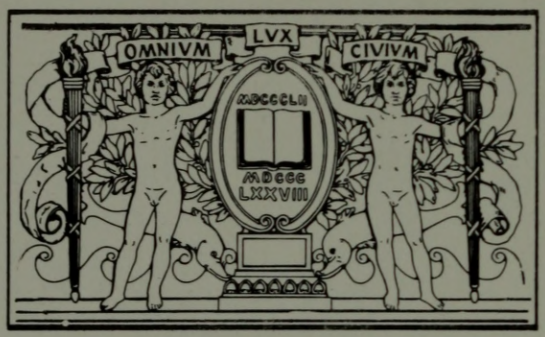

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The Goulds

THE WHITNEYS

An
Informal Portrait
1635-1975

EDWIN P. HOYT

Weybright and Talley
New York

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The Whitneys

Introduction: The Grand Design

Over three hundred years a handful of American families have shown the originality, staying power, and even genius that raise men's heads above the crowd. Some of these families have been notable for a single attribute or line of thought: Morgan, for example, is a name that brings the image of money in a bank vault; Vanderbilt conjures the picture of a belching steam locomotive; Peabody reminds one of education and the ministry; Gould of high finance.

One family, springing from stock that came to the infant Massachusetts colony in 1635, has produced a line over three centuries that spans the whole panoply of American life; if there were any possibility of telling the story of America through the activities of a single family, perhaps it could be through the Whitneys of USA. For from the moment that John and Elinor Whitney set sail from England in one of the flimsy little caravels of the seventeenth century to cross beneath the buffeting winds and smashing seas of the North Atlantic, the Whitneys have been a part and parcel of American life. More—and the important matter—is that in every generation and every time the Whitneys have brought forth leaders: bankers, teachers, inventors, artists, statesmen, and industrialists.

As one can see easily enough by looking at the fair hair and long jaw of many American Whitneys over three centuries, the name is Saxon in origin, and comes from Witan—which meant that some ancient Whitney in early British history was a wise man or advisor to the ruling chief of the Saxons, and the name stayed with his descendents. Consequently, a parish in the green swards of Herefordshire was

named Whitney at about the time of the coming of William the Conqueror in the eleventh century.

The known history of the family comes after the conquest by William. In the redistribution of English lands a Whitney took a large fief in Herefordshire and was confirmed in it by the new emperor as Lord of Whitney. Thereafter the castles and houses were Whitney property, strengthened by the patronage of the church of Pencomb (the Whitney church), and a Whitney was usually high sheriff of Herefordshire, unless he happened at a given moment to be in disfavor with the ruling monarch. Whitneys were also active in Parliament—Eustace de Whitney served there under Edward II, and other Whitneys were lords of his master's table at various times. Sir Piege Exroy, Lord of Whitney, was a knight of Arthur's round table, they said, and came often to Camelot from his own castle at Cardomore in Cardingshire.

Of course, the Whitneys were not always on what we might consider the "right side" of things. One, Sir Thomas Lucy, a Lord of Whitney, has gone down in history for prosecuting William Shakespeare successfully for poaching.

John, who was the first American Whitney, was born in 1589 in Isleworth parish, on the Thames, opposite Richmond, nine miles from the old limits of London. He married as a young man. Her name was Elinor; the records show no more. Nor do they show how John lived and how he worked.

In April 1635, John and Elinor Whitney and five sons boarded the little ship *Elizabeth and Ann*, Roger Cooper master, and took passage for the New World. Obviously something had gone wrong in England, and this Whitney settled on emigration at the age of fifty-six to try to establish a new competency for himself and his family. There was in England enough knowledge about the cold and the privations of New England to prevent any but the most carefree from moving there as a lark. The prime consideration for those not motivated by religious concerns—and there is no reason to link the Whitneys to a religious movement in this—was the availability of land at low cost. For a fraction of what one would pay for an acre in England, one could have a hundred acres in Massachusetts.

Elinor Whitney was much younger than her husband. She had begun bearing children in England in 1619, and now, in 1635, in the New World a son, Joshua, was born at their farmhouse in Waterton, Massachusetts colony.

Old John survived Elinor. She died a few years later (1659), while he lived to be eighty-five years old, dying June 1, 1673, in the midst of the war against the Indians. By the day of John's death, life had

changed greatly in Massachusetts. Massachusetts and New York were quarreling over the western and northern lands, and the colder, less-welcoming country of Maine was being opened. No longer were the great tracts available for the asking.

By the end of his life, John Whitney had recouped what he had lost in England. His original home farm was 16 acres, which indicated that he was more trader and perhaps artisan than farmer. But soon he owned 212 acres in small plots around Waterton, and he gave these to his boys. He served at various times as constable and selectman, and tax collector. By the time of his death the Whitneys were established in Waterton.

The boys began scattering around Massachusetts, marrying and begetting their own sons and daughters. But all those Whitneys, from whom would descend the various Whitneys of America, went back to John and Elinor and that fateful decision of 1635 to take their chances in Massachusetts.

As America prospered and grew so did the sons of old John Whitney of England, and before the twentieth century was born Whitneys had risen to wealth and the highest positions in the land. As the century moved along so did the Whitneys. They were into mining and manufacturing, when those enterprises were beginning to flourish. A Whitney pioneered in the air line business, and saw that endeavor become a major American industry. As the nation became more complex and communications more important than ever before, a Whitney built a communications empire. When the development of leisure for the working people made entertainment major industry, a Whitney became owner of a baseball club. The Whitneys had a genius, it seemed, for sensing the temper of their times.

The Whitneys cover a large canvas. What other family that goes back so far can show a better picture of American life?

I

The Dreamers and Shapers

The infant years of the British experiment in America coincided with the development of the industrial revolution, and in this change several Whitneys would play vital roles. They would participate in the shaping of a new kind of economy and a new approach to life.

In England, whence the Whitneys had come, the land was bounded. John Whitney had moved to America to escape the economic fetters of his day. The new continent was boundless, but it had its limitations of transportation and goods and workable instruments with which to take the best from the land.

Three Whitneys would be involved significantly in the economic revolution of the nineteenth century. One was Eli Whitney, who invented a cotton gin and later developed the assembly-line technique that was to revolutionize industry as completely as Congress revolutionized the land. The second and third contributors were both named Asa: one was an inventor of cotton manufacturing machinery and a new railroad wheel; the other was the progenitor of the Pacific Railroad. The work of these three Whitneys helped change the face of industrial America, and that of the first of them, Eli, has never been properly recorded, nor has he, or, for that matter, the two Asas, been given credit for his true accomplishments.

1/ The Man Who Invented Modern Industry

Westborough, Massachusetts, is not the finest of agricultural land—it is not agricultural land at all anymore but a suburb of Boston. Even in the middle of the eighteenth century the land did not lend itself to rich dry farming; it was not to be compared with the Connecticut Valley. Corn grew well here for a few seasons, until the minerals in the soil were depleted. Then the land was more suitable for pasturing animals. But it was better than the land immediately to the west, which was so poor that in this day no one had settled it but had gone beyond.

Nowadays Westborough is just "Greater Boston," but in 1750 it was a forty-mile ride by horse or wagon and thus about a good two-day journey to Boston. Westborough lived unto itself, an inland farming community, cut off from the sea and from the city of 20,000 to the east.

Earlier in the century, Nathaniel, of the sixth generation of the John Whitney family, had come to this hamlet and stopped—for reasons no one knew. Had he pushed on into the valley of the Connecticut River he might have prospered more, as did the Morgans, who were then also farmers, moving out from eastern Massachusetts. Nathaniel Whitney had to farm to live, but on the hundred acres he settled here he could scarcely support his own family, and if he cut up the land, it was not going to take care of his sons. So already in this infant America the economic problems of the past were revisiting the children of the Whitneys of England. They had come to escape some economic duress, and in the kind of society in which they lived there was no escape. A man had to be industrious and sober and even lucky to make out well in the New World.

Nathaniel was a big man. But he was always active and hard working. Soon he had more than the one hundred acres. He married and had children. One of them was a boy named Eli, who was born in 1741. Through his father's industry and his own he managed to secure sufficient land to make a living, and grew up a respected, energetic farmer raising sheep and cows and grain enough to sell.

This Eli Whitney was even larger than his father. He weighed

three hundred pounds, yet he was an attractive man and not a slothful one. He married a girl named Elizabeth Fay, who was the daughter of another respectable Westborough farmer. In January 1765, eleven months later, Eli Whitney, Jr., was born.

Then came a baby girl, Elizabeth. Eli and Elizabeth grew up in relative luxury. There were servants in the house, maids, and farmhands. Consequently, instead of spending his early life in the barn, as did his father, Eli Whitney, Jr., before he was ten, had a lathe on which he could make furniture. His father spent his days behind the plow and tending the animals while young Eli fiddled instead of worked.

Fiddled was the word. One day the elder Whitney came home from a trip and asked the housekeeper what his son had been doing.

"Making a fiddle," said the housekeeper.

Old Whitney bridled.

"I fear Eli will have to take his portion in fiddles," said the Puritan father in anger.

For what he wanted was a son like the one he had been to his father, who would sow and reap and take his chances on the farm.

These were hard years. The Revolution had begun. Westborough was deeply involved, sending its young men to serve beneath the Massachusetts flag and then under the colors of the Congress. Old Eli was too old and too fat to shoulder a musket or ride a horse into battle. Son Eli was too young even to be a drummer boy when the fighting started, and his brother was born in these years, too young indeed.

It was not a happy time for the Whitneys, for following the birth of the younger brother, Benjamin, Mother Elizabeth did not regain her strength. She died a few months later. That death brought strains on the household, because old Eli brought in more servants to care for his progeny and continued to spend his time on the farm and in the pew.

There was simply no turning Eli, Jr., to the affairs of the farm—he resisted as stoutly as he could, and all his spare time was spent in examining the physical works of man, not of nature.

He repaired violins and other musical instruments to earn his pocket money.

When Eli was thirteen, his father married again. There were four children in the household: Eli, Elizabeth, Benjamin, and eight-year-old Joseph. Two stepsisters now came to join them. Rightly, Eli should have been out in the barns, taking charge of at least one aspect of the farm in the summers and when school was out. But still he puttered with mechanical works, much to his father's despair.

But Eli did not escape the farm work entirely because of his unwillingness and his other interests. He was charged that year with the care of sixty head of cattle. In the winter he got up at dawn, pulled

down hay from the barn, and broke the ice before he went off to school. After school he bedded the animals down for the night. Then—and only then—he could escape into his father's workshop and dream and fabricate to his heart's content.

In that workshop ideas flowed, as Eli observed the world around him carefully. He noticed that war had created a shortage of common nails in Westborough. Previously nails had been brought from Boston, but now the iron that made them was diverted to war uses, and those who would build houses or implements were sorely tried by the shortage. Eli sat down with a pencil and paper and formulated a scheme for making nails.

He would need a forge and a few simple tools to stretch the long pieces of iron that would become nails. His father was the source of wealth as well as the owner of the workshop, so Eli, Jr., went to the older man with his plan. With all his hard Puritanism, Eli Whitney, Sr., was a sensible and fair man, and he immediately saw that his son was right: there was a market to be filled and a profit to be made in the shortage. So he put up the money and Eli, Jr., began his nail factory in the shop.

For two winters Eli, Jr., made nails, although he found time to make knife blades and other tools for himself and his neighbors, and to continue his modified farm chores as payment for his room and board.

The nail demand outstripped the supply, which once again forced Eli to think with a pencil. If he had a man to help him with the work, he could hire the man, pay his room and board to his father, and make more than twice as many nails.

Labor was in short supply. Eli did not have the courage to go to his father with so brazen a plan unless he knew there was a man available. So he told Elizabeth about the idea, made an excuse to go away for a day, and set out on horseback, on the road to a nearby town, not having forgotten to ask his father's permission to borrow a horse for the journey.

He began to search. Most of the men, he found, were occupied with soldiering or with work vital to the Continental armies. It was not easy to find someone who could work with metal, who was free to come, and who wanted to work in Westborough. He was three days in finding his man and getting back to the house. By that time his father was angry and upset that the overnight journey had taken so long.

But, Eli, Jr., came in with his worker, a man named Thayer, and explained what had happened. Eli, Sr., was content. He was, after all, an eminently reasonable man.

When the war ended in 1783, suddenly all the shortages that had plagued New England could be alleviated. Nails—instead of cannon

balls—could be made once again in Boston and some fabricated parts could again be imported from an England that was at peace with her former colony. Soon England was dumping cheap nails on the American market.

There was no big investment in the nail factory, and Eli, Jr., was quick to see that his market had dried up. He showed a good understanding of one of the first rules of manufacture: be certain of your market. Having found the market dead, he looked for another, and found it in the household by observing his sister and stepsisters. The war over, women could indulge a sense of fashion that had been most unseemly in the days of fighting when the materials of petticoats were needed for bandages. Now, the ladies blossomed forth in huge floppy hats that required many pins to protect them from the wintry winds, and Eli Whitney, Jr., soon had a market in hatpins, selling in Boston and even farther afield.

But there was not much happiness in the Whitney family these days; Judith, the new wife, was a shrew. She showed no compunction about favoring her daughters in everything, at the expense of Whitney's children.

The Whitney farm could survive only if it were given to one child. Benjamin, Eli knew, was the farmer of the family; so let Benjamin have it. Eli planned to go away and get an education and strike out for himself.

When Eli, Sr., was approached with this plan, his innate conservatism caused him to oppose it. The farm and Westborough should be good enough for Eli. Eli could have the workshop.

But Eli was adamant; he wanted an education.

Judith Whitney opposed the plan—it would take money that should be used for her and her children. What right did a grown boy—no, a man—have to ask his father for support to go to school? Eli, Jr., was too old and should be out earning his living.

Indeed, Eli was old for further education. He was nineteen. The argument continued, but finally Eli, Sr., decided to help his son, and agreed to contribute to his support at the academy in the town of Leicester. When Eli, Jr., was twenty years old, he set out one January day for that town and enrolled in the academy.

For three years he followed the poor boy's way of getting an education: he went to school part of the year, and taught school much of the rest to earn the tuition for his next courses.

Finally, Eli Whitney, Jr., thought he was ready for college. Then came the great struggle that had been building for three years; Judith Whitney exerted every effort to persuade Eli, Sr., not to give his son the money.

Eli had been largely self-supporting. The neighboring town of Grafton had hired him to teach its common school at seven dollars a month and room and board, and he had increases. But he would need about a thousand dollars to start and finish an education at Yale College, where he had chosen to go. Judith was furious at the thought of it.

Eli, Jr., persevered. He taught at Westborough, and the elders of the school declared themselves fully satisfied with his performance. His father was impressed.

Young Eli pleaded again, in 1787, for the money to enter Yale. His father delayed, urged by Judith.

So he taught again at Paxton in the fall, and was recommended with encomiums by the town fathers.

Then he taught at Hopkinton in the fall of 1788, and went back to Leicester to improve his own studies. The headmaster, the Rev. Benjamin Conklin, declared to his father that Eli, Jr., was a fine scholar. He had trouble with languages, but he persevered, and in the end the headmaster was reasonably sure young Whitney could pass the Yale College entrance examinations.

All that really stood in his way was his stepmother. She was determined that the money would not be spent. Her victory seemed certain, for Eli was growing so old that soon it would be ridiculous for him to talk further of entering college.

Then Judith overplayed her hand.

Eli, Jr., was home for the summer, helping with the haying. He and the others worked in the hot sun, raking the scythed grass into sheaves and pulling them on the flatbed wagons to the barn. One day, in midafternoon, the heat was punctured by a sudden thunderstorm. Eli, Jr., was caught out in it, and suffered a chill. That night he was seized by rheumatism and one leg swelled up below the knee, causing him great pain. He seemed to get better. In three days he was riding about on his horse, but he caught more cold and his leg became infected. He had to go to bed. The doctor came and cut open his shin and scraped the bone.

While Eli was in the house, in bed all day long, his father and brothers were in the hayfields; his sister was off teaching school in a nearby town. He was at the mercy of his stepmother and her daughters, Hannah and Nancy.

These women punished the bedridden stepbrother for all his sins of longing by ignoring him. He had medicines to take, but they would not listen to his pleas for water. He could not get up. He lay there, alone, for hours.

Each day stepmother and stepsisters grew more uncaring, until

finally one day when he was feeling quite ill, they left him alone without attention or water for five and a half hours.

When Eli, Sr., came home for supper that evening, as was his custom, he called in to see how the invalid was faring. Eli broke down. He told his father the story of the past weeks and said he wanted to be moved out of the house because he could not stand another day of mistreatment.

Eli, Sr., was, indeed, a just and honorable man. He grew furious with the recital of the facts and dressed down his wife and stepdaughters.

Sister Elizabeth heard the tale and, distrusting her stepsisters and stepmother, dismissed her school and came home to nurse Eli.

Thus Judith lost the battle, and her husband no longer listened to her complaints. She had no further courage to make an open fight, so on March 4, 1789, old Eli got out the family sleigh, hitched it up, and drove young Eli to Brookfield, where they stayed at the inn of Captain Hitchcock. The weather was breaking, the sleighing not good. So the senior Whitney gave his son the money necessary to start out his college career, bade him good-bye and went back to Westborough, while Eli, Jr., took the stage for Durham, where he would study for a few weeks with an eminent classics scholar named Dr. Elizur Goodrich, in preparation for the difficult Yale entrance examinations. Dr. Goodrich was the most prominent member of the Yale corporation.

Half the academic year was over when Eli Whitney appeared at Yale for his entrance examinations, having passed the tests Dr. Goodrich set for him. But it would not do to wait for fall and another class—time was slipping by too swiftly. Eli Whitney was already twenty-three years old, and the oldest applicant for the college.

The president of Yale College was then Dr. Ezra Stiles, and he conducted Eli's examination, which lasted from nine o'clock in the morning until after two o'clock in the afternoon. During those hours, Whitney was tested on the classics, Greek and Latin, English grammar, and arithmetic. He did well enough, and Dr. Stiles understood how much the half year meant to him, so Eli was allowed the privilege of entering a class of forty-two other young men who had already completed a half year's work.

Eli Whitney was an unusual student. First of all, he did not aspire to become a teacher or a preacher or a lawyer or a doctor as did most of his companions. Nor had he the slightest interest in going into trade; otherwise he would have apprenticed himself to a banker or a merchant. He would teach, of course—it was a way of earning money—but he had other matters on his mind. The only word that existed in the language to define his occupational aim in those days was

"mechanic." If he was to be a "mechanic," then he would become the kind of mechanic that Thomas Jefferson was, a gentleman using these earthy arts and practices to improve the lot of the world around him.

The Yale of 1789 was a quiet temple in a busy commercial city. Whitney settled in to college life as an unexceptionable member of the Yale community. He, a young, rough farmer from Massachusetts, dwelt with southern swells and New York's society crowd. He had little cultural attainment, in terms of art, literature, and poetry. But he set out to learn, he reformed his farmer's way of dress and thereafter forever took grave pains with his wardrobe. He cultivated an elegant handwriting.

In time he began to talk as though he was planning to become a lawyer—but his interests definitely lay elsewhere. He joined the Linonian Society—a reading club. He joined Phi Beta Kappa, which was then a social fraternity, not a society dedicated to scholarship.

He was a leader of his class, as well he might be, being oldest member.

The aftermath of Revolution had been hard times—so hard that Massachusetts had experienced the trauma of Shays' Rebellion a little while before Eli Whitney went off to college. The hard times continued, and grew worse in the last year of his college. His father began to have difficulty in supporting Eli in school. If the son thought seriously of extending his education and reading law in the office of some learned member of the bar, he thought twice now, for back in Westborough there was little cash. Most of what the family used was grown on the farm or bartered for farm produce, and there was not much need for cash. But in a city like New Haven, cash was necessary; and in the spring of his senior year creditors were pressing Eli Whitney, Jr. He needed about a hundred and fifty dollars for the next year. Whitney did earn some money by tutoring, but the opportunities at Yale were not great. He worried much that year.

Academically, Eli's "disputations and compositions" were inclined to the political or sociological rather than the flowery rhetoric of the literary community of the day; his field was that of practical affairs. He did write some poetry, most of it dedicated to the ideas of freedom from the British yoke, the progress of the new government, and the opportunity for Americans.

But mainly he was involved in the study or repair of mechanical devices.

He had been studying science in particular; his courses included all the known sciences, with heavy emphasis on physics and optics.

As he continued to study, his father's letters were as cordial as

ever, but they also made it clear that after this ultimate college year there really could be no more support unless affairs at home changed much for the better. Goods were high, land was high, capital was short—all the age-old symptoms of inflation and depression were there. It was a time for consolidation, not expansion, old Eli Whitney's strong sense of self-preservation told him.

Eli, Jr., could have hastened back to the farm, but such was furthest from his mind. In truth, he no longer could fit into life at Westborough. He dressed too well, he bathed too often, he thought too much—even his new mode of conversation was too light and erudite for a farm.

In those days college men left Yale in the spring and went home to help with the agricultural chores. At least, that was the original intention when the college was founded. By now most of its students would not know how to use a flail or a scythe, but the practice persisted of holding graduation in the autumn, after harvest.

In the spring of 1792, Eli Whitney, Jr., paid what he could on his debts, gave notes for the rest with the assurance that he would be back in September to graduate and pay up.

He went to see President Stiles before he went home, and Stiles said he had found him a job for the autumn, teaching in New York City. Eli went home, filled with hope, to help temporarily with the chores. His father assumed his notes and promised Eli that he should have a little cash for clothing and that he would pay whatever charges came from graduation.

September came, and Eli Whitney, Jr., went back to New Haven for the baccalaureat sermon, the Phi Beta Kappa ceremonies, the fireworks, and the parades along the campus and the edge of town and down by the courthouse and the green. Then came commencement, with musicians, an anthem, a prayer, an oration in English, and a Greek dialogue. A formal dinner at the college, more orations, prayers, and a final procession at sunset finished the day.

Some time during all this ceremony and the work that preceded it, President Stiles had a chance for a chat with Eli Whitney. He mentioned casually that the New York school appointment had been canceled—they had found someone else.

Whitney was dismayed. He has counted on the New York appointment for his livelihood. His stepmother and stepsisters would make life intolerable for him if he went home to Westborough now, having spent *a thousand dollars* over the past four years for education, and as they always said: Education for what?

He was twenty-eight years old, his stepmother said scornfully, and what had he done or was he going to do with his life?

Eli Whitney was discouraged. After four years, the world should offer him something, it would seem. New York had been one kind of vision—New York was the fastest-growing city in America and contained its own excitements and challenges. One could certainly find opportunity for oneself in such a place.

But now New York was gone, and in its place President Stiles offered Whitney an appointment as a tutor to a family of children in the Deep South.

The South! The end of the world. The sink hole of America—this was the way that Eli Whitney thought of it.

Yet there was nothing to be done. If Eli Whitney did not take the post, he would not get any more help from his old mentor. That was certain.

Feeling sorry for himself, and writing in that vein to his younger brother, Eli Whitney bent himself to circumstance. He was about to set out by ship for Charleston, and then to go to Savannah. Then he would head for "some village," he wrote his brother. The way he said it meant he was heading into an exile from which he scarcely hoped to return. He worried about the climate—"something unhealthy"—and he dramatized himself even to his father. "If I should find my health declining, I shall return, if possible before it is too late."

He hoped to save $250 a year, which he said was more than he could do on the farm. He did not know what he was going to do with his life—he considered all life to be a lottery "in which many draw blanks, one of which may fall to my share." Altogether he was not hopeful as he sailed in October from New York—glorious October, when the harbor near Staten Island glistened in the autumn sunshine and the water was still warm from summer's sun so the breezes wafted cleanly about the ship. But once they were opposite the island, Whitney's mood was confirmed by the weather. The wind turned sour, and they were forced to beat their way to Sandy Hook and then out to sea, to clear the Jersey Shore and round Cape Hatteras.

Outside, the wind changed for the better, and they made good time to Savannah—arriving in a week at Tibe lighthouse, which stands at the edge of the river leading up to the handsome southern city. Unfortunately, Eli Whitney was seasick nearly all the way.

They came inshore to a new world. Eli Whitney had never before seen growing oranges or pomegranates, or figs or olives, and he was enough of a naturalist and intellectual to take great interest.

He traveled down south with the family of Mrs. Nathaniel Greene, widow of the famous Revolutionary War general, who had come to New Haven on business of her own. She was accompanied by Phineas Miller, who had joined the Greene family years earlier as a

tutor to the children (just as another family was now hiring Whitney). When General Greene died, leaving his financial affairs in a tangle, Miller had stayed on to become Mrs. Greene's manager. Miller was a Connecticut man himself so he had turned to Yale College when his planter friend needed a tutor—and that is how Eli Whitney had the job offer that took him south. Whitney could scarcely hope that the planter in question would die immediately—but there was in Miller's story something to bring hope to a young man who had previously considered that he was going into deepest exile.

Possessed of a lively curiosity, Whitney watched the new world unfold about him. He spent one night with the Greene entourage in a Savannah hotel. He saw the people in the farms growing corn and potatoes, with which he was familiar, and rice, with which he was not. Next day, the Greene family moved upcountry to the plantation, and it was expected that Eli would leave in a day or two, cross the river and travel the few miles by horseback that would take him to his new post.

But something happened.

For one thing, while walking about the Greene properties Eli took the same great interest shown before, this time in the cotton plants that grew in neat rows up and down the huge plantation.

But what a problem was cotton production. Each morning in the harvest season when the bolls were open and the white protruded, women, children, and men—all slaves—lined up with picking bags in the long rows, and dragged their produce behind them until the bags were filled, when they were picked up by wagons, and the process begun all over again. That was only the beginning. The hard part came next. Someone had to clean the green-seed cotton—separate the long white, stubborn twisted fibers from the seed and the unusable husk that clung to the cotton. The process of separating one pound of clean staple cotton from seed and husk took a woman or a child a full day's work. Obviously, the growing of cotton was not a satisfactory way of farming—and yet this Georgia land was much more suitable for cotton than for rice or sugar cane.

Eli Whitney's interest in what went on around him was suddenly extinguished, however, by the same kind of disappointment he had faced regarding the New York job. There was a misunderstanding over the rate of pay, there were other difficulties, and the result was that the tutoring job evaporated into thin air, leaving Eli Whitney with no job and virtually no resources.

Mr. Miller, with the concurrence of Mrs. Greene, offered him indefinite residence and the run of the house as a guest at no cost. Eli could even study the law if he wished.

That was some small consolation for the young man. At worst, in

a few months he could apply to his father for money to return to New England. He anticipated that he would be back in the North not later than June of the following year.

But in the month that followed his arrival, Eli Whitney's affairs took a decided turn for the better. He was a melancholy soul, forever blaming Dame Fortune and Cruel Fate for his vicissitudes. And he was not very lucky—or had not been until one day when a group of General Greene's old officers, plantation owners for the most part, came to pay a call on Mrs. Greene. They got to talking business—which to them meant the farming business—and the conversation came around to cotton.

One of the men mentioned the vital problem of getting cotton out of the boll. If only someone could invent a separator.

"Gentlemen," said Mrs. Greene, "apply to my young friend, Mr. Whitney. He can make anything."

For in the weeks since he had come to the house, in order to justify his existence, Eli had kept his eye out for ways in which he could serve his hostess. He had made toys for the children. One day Mrs. Greene had complained that the frame she used for her embroidery was an incompetent device. Whitney looked it over, said he could do better, and in a few hours presented her with one of his own design that she said was far superior.

So when Mrs. Greene spoke so fervently and described what Eli Whitney had done, the gentlemen looked at him quizzically but respectfully, and soon he was admitting that he was sure he could produce just such a machine in a short time.

There was thoughtful conversation, Whitney said he could have a model ready by spring, and when the men left it was with serious interest in this young man from the North who addressed himself to one of their basic problems.

The cotton season ended, but Whitney had a small supply of cotton in the bolls on which to practice. Overseer Miller gave him quarters in the basement of the big house for a laboratory-shop. He assembled the best tools that could be found in Savannah, and he began to design his machine.

He had to do many things himself—create secondary materials, for example. There was no wire available in the area, so he drew on the experience he had as a hatpin maker and made his own wire from steel.

He was happy now, facing the prospect of making something work, and hopeful that he had found a way to establish his fortune. Miller and Mrs. Greene took an interest in his work, and watched as he drew his plans and began to make the model machine.

He and Miller had already arranged a partnership: Whitney would

have his board and pocket money and all resources necessary for the invention. Thus he would advance only his time. Miller would stand the other expenses, and they would be partners.

The roller gins that were in use in those days were primitive machines, looking something like the wringer on top of an old-fashioned washing machine. The two rollers turned with a crank, and the friction pulled away fibers of the long cotton from its smooth black seeds. The rollers were fluted and grooves caught up the lint but did not let the seeds through.

That gin was almost useless for the green-seed upland cotton that grew in this part of Georgia, and so the cotton harvesting was done entirely by hand. It was scarcely worth the trouble, and that is why the gentlemen who visited Mrs. Greene were so interested in Whitney and his idea.

The Savannah area was buzzing with talk about this young man and his plan. Almost immediately Whitney discovered the need for extreme caution. A few days after the party had left, Whitney produced a small-scale model that did exactly what he said it would do, and was promptly offered a hundred guineas—about $500, or two years pay as a tutor—if he would turn it over and give up all rights.

That offer sobered him and frightened him at the same time. For now that he had produced the model and was sure of the principles, he was certain of the simplicity of solving the practical problem of full-scale invention.

As a student of natural history, Whitney was also aware of the ambience of inventions—that is, the strange natural process by which a need becomes apparent to a number of men at the same time quite independently. Whitney and Miller began to work with the utmost secrecy to perfect the machine, knowing that they were fighting time and others who must be engaged in similar pursuits. For Whitney forecast that a machine run by a single slave could produce ten times as much cleaned cotton as the old gins, and could make the green-seed cotton viable. By using a horse or waterpower, the machine could be made to produce fifty times as much per day as the old method.

With this discovery and the knowledge that they were watched, Miller and Whitney became even more secretive. Whitney did not write home at all during the winter months, partly because he did not want to discuss his invention.

By spring the invention was completed, at least as a working device. The formal partnership of Miller & Whitney was formed on May 27, 1793, and the pair began plans to produce the cotton gin for use on the plantations.

By now, of course, the two realized that they were vulnerable to

every handyman in the South and in the world. Unless they could secure a patent for their invention, anyone could make and sell cotton gins without paying them a penny. Worse, if they did not patent the gin, then someone else could certainly do so, and it was conceivable that the inventor could be almost totally deprived of the fruits of his labors. It had happened before, and would happen again.

Sure enough, it happened now. The principle was relatively simple and the need great—there were clever men abroad in the South. Denison Olmsted, in his little memoir of Eli Whitney, says that Miller & Whitney were so naïve that they displayed the machine publicly. Someone broke into the building at night and carried off the model.

Miller heard that at least three other machines were in the works. Whitney, who had no plantation to manage, immediately headed north to take the steps necessary to secure a patent and protect their invention from poachers. Miller began laying plans to secure dealers and to fight for their rights if necessary.

Whitney went to Philadelphia, which was then the national capital, and presented his first petition for patent to Thomas Jefferson, the Secretary of State, under whose personal jurisdiction such matters then fell.

But there was no success. Jefferson was in the office only sporadically. He spent his time at his home in Germantown. The yellow fever was ravaging Philadelphia that summer, and the politicians had scattered far and wide to avoid the dreaded disease, for which there was no cure. There was nothing to be done but to go away and come back again later. Whitney had only the satisfaction of knowing that none of his competitors could do anything either.

He headed then for New Haven, and arrived in that more salubrious climate during the first week of July 1793. Obviously he had money from the partnership for the journey; for the first time he did not complain to his father about being badly off and he announced without equivocation that he was going to stay in New Haven. The reason must have been the availability to him of Yale's extensive library, which he wanted to consult in drawing his detailed plans for the invention. He promised to come and see his father that summer, before he returned south in the fall after the fever season ended. But he spoke in his letters like an independent man.

Only in September did Eli Whitney finally reveal to his father what he had been doing for the past year: he wrote a letter to Westborough outlining his invention and his work on it.

At least Whitney now knew what he must do. There were specific steps to be followed to obtain a patent in the United States. But Whitney and Miller both understood that this invention was interna-

tional, and that gave them a new problem. No international patent convention existed; if Whitney wished to protect his patent, he had to do so by securing its adoption in every country where it might be used. Particularly, he was interested in the British Empire, which then controlled much of the cotton-producing areas of the world. That patent would have to be secured in London.

Waiting in New Haven for the hot weather to cease, Whitney began his work. He drew detailed plans. He began work on a scale model, as required by the Secretary of State. He was so certain of the success of the invention that he said if someone offered him $10,000—an enormous sum—he would turn it down.

Whitney had another reason for coming to New Haven. Here he could find plenty of mechanics, men he could hire to run a shop and manufacture the cotton gins. So his work was manifold: he had to build a factory, hire employees, design machinery to make the invention, and make it as quickly as possible. A patent, once it was obtained, would protect the Whitney invention and prevent pirates from stealing it outright. But the fortunes of Whitney and Miller depended on their ability to make and sell the product. Otherwise, they would simply be owners of an invention and secure a royalty on the machines sold by others.

That was never their intention.

In New York, Philadelphia, and New Haven, Whitney scoured the toolmakers shops, finding what he would need to build his factory and make the tools to produce the cotton gin. Drawing boards, screws for the lathes, iron filings, nails, locks and keys for the shop door—all these and a thousand other items are detailed neatly in the expense ledger he kept to justify the costs he was incurring in behalf of the partnership. Miller remained on the plantation and ran the Greene estates and met the expenses.

Whitney had to make almost everything for the gin. For example, the wire: good thin wire came from France, where it was a by-product of the French love for splendid military uniforms. The men who learned to draw gold so fine also turned their skills to silver and to stronger materials. Wire, then, was a French export and was not made in America. Whitney could hardly afford to buy such wire. Nor could he conduct the negotiations for the quantities he would need, because the gin depended on the use of a special resilient wire. He would have to make it himself. He procured timbers and blocks and hooks and oil—all the tools for manufacture of this component.

Everything was done by trial and error. He personally had to design the tools and the benches and the equipment, piece by piece. So

the summer passed, and Eli Whitney did not go to Westborough to visit the family. He wrote voluminous letters to his father and brothers and sister instead.

He was busy. The days grew long and he began working at night by candlelight at his drawing board.

By the middle of October he had the drawings of his machine in such condition that he was ready to send them to Secretary Jefferson as the next step in his attempt to secure the patent.

Jefferson received the papers gladly: this was precisely the kind of invention that would interest him, not only for its universal application, but because as a Virginia plantation owner, he could see the values, and he could see how he could use such a machine himself to harvest upland cotton that would grow as far north as Charlottesville.

By the end of the year Miller had made a most unwise decision. They would not build cotton gins and sell them—they would establish ginneries around the South, like tanneries in the North; farmers would bring their cotton to be ginned and would pay for the privilege. The firm of Miller & Whitney would control all the ginneries and own all the gins.

When the plantation owners of the cotton district learned of the scheme, they grew furious. They were independent men, and they wanted control of their own resources of production. Under the Miller scheme a man would grow his cotton, his slaves would pick it, load it on wagons and take it perhaps fifty miles to a ginnery, wait for it to be processed, bring it back, finish the cleaning and packing, bale it (for the baling was an arduous process that took special machinery), and then put it back on the wagons and carry it to the point of market.

For Miller & Whitney the plan might seem to have merit; for the cotton industry it had very small merit indeed. Miller did not have the capital to put up enough ginneries, and the distances between ginnery and plantations were going to be much too great.

Miller proposed to take every third pound of cotton as a fee for ginning, with cotton selling at thirty-three cents a pound.

Even honest men, then, began to chafe, and talk about building their own cotton gins, and several new gins were put on the market in twos and threes, using the Whitney idea but making some minor changes in design to avoid any complaint of theft. These "highway robbers" were not going to get away with taking a third of the farmers' produce for just one process!

Still there was enough demand that Georgia was full of talk about the cotton gin, and Miller kept writing letters to Whitney asking him when he could begin supplying the machines.

Whitney had to be sure it was all machine-perfect. The gins would have to stand up to tremendous pressures and heavy use. It was taking time to put the manufactory together.

The principle was simple: a revolving cylinder pushed the cotton along teeth which worked through slats and a brush, tearing the cotton from its seeds, the brush whisking the fiber from the teeth and the seeds dropping down into a hopper.

In October the letter from Whitney traveled to Philadelphia. Jefferson had it on November 6. All that was left was to produce the scale model.

Jefferson's interest continued to be high—particularly his personal interest—and he wanted more information about the machine. Whitney obviously did not understand his partner's marketing scheme, for he wrote knowingly to Jefferson that the price "will however be so low as to induce the purchaser and give them a preference to any other. . . ."

And in spite of the abjurations to hurry, the inventor would not be hurried. He was making one large-scale machine first of all. This gin would be shipped to Mulberry Grove for the use of the Greene Plantations and for exhibition. As far as Eli Whitney knew, that one machine would be all he could manufacture before the spring of 1794.

Now the job was to finish the scale model for the patent, to finish the big working model for Miller & Whitney and to get into production. The months sped by as Eli Whitney worked to these ends. It was March before he finally arrived in Philadelphia with his model. Jefferson had quarreled with Washington by this time, and quit his post as Secretary of State, but Secretary of State Edmund Randolph accepted the model. Whitney now found himself considerably lionized in Philadelphia, for the word was out that he had just perfected one of the most amazing inventions of the day. Here Eli was—the same fellow who had been worrying two years earlier about where he would eat and buy his clothes—now attending soirées and balls among the bewigged and patent-leathered society of glittering Philadelphia. He had letters to several important people, courtesy of President Ezra Stiles of Yale; he did not need introductions to gentlemen from the South, for the southern states were abuzz with the stories about Miller & Whitney and the remarkable new invention. As Whitney wrote home to his father, his reception in Philadelphia was a complete triumph. Young Eli Whitney was on his way.

Miller was eager to have Whitney hurry south with the perfected invention, but Whitney returned to New Haven. The gin was not yet ready. He had with him now a passport, which gave him the privilege of traveling abroad. It was his thought that he would have to go to

England to secure the patents there, too. So he also had a letter from Randolph to Minister Charles C. Pinckney in London.

The pressure grew stronger for Whitney to come south—Miller became so insistent that Whitney did not even go to see his father before he left Connecticut.

He had six machines finished when he left for the cotton country. As he traveled, the word was moving about the South that the celebrated ginning machines were at last in production. Miller was already advertising in the newspapers—he would take five pounds of cotton in the seed and return one pound clean for market.

When Whitney arrived in Georgia, he heard the terms with some consternation about the results, but he was the inventor, not a businessman. Miller was in charge, and Miller took the point of view that they would have to get $500 each for the machines in order to pay their cost. Few planters could afford such a machine for themselves; it could do more work than they needed anyhow. That is why Miller proceeded with his production scheme. Even those who did not like the infringement on their independence began to understand the reasoning, if they did not agree with it. Anyhow, with only a half-dozen machines in operation, the questions of ownership for that year was academic.

While Whitney had been working on the invention and settling the legal aspects of the title to it, Miller had spent much time and trouble traveling around the cotton country. Mulberry Grove itself was to be one center, and he planned for five machines there. Augusta would be a ginning center; so would Washington, and Petersburgh—others would be set up in South Carolina and North Carolina. The whole cotton country would be covered. Already, too, Miller was making deals to secure more overseers and slaves. He was buying animals to turn the machinery.

So while Whitney had been setting up "the machine," Miller had been setting up the business—planning forms and records for a vast enterprise.

One Whitney invention followed another that spring. Indeed, Whitney was not so much an "inventor" as he was the progenitor of a whole new way of doing things. What he was doing here was not quite the assembly line, but it was the integration of many operations to produce a single final product. For example: he invented a bagging machine to attach to the gins; it saved labor.

By late spring, Miller realized that he did not have the capital to undertake all the operations, so he began offering the rights to others to run the ginning mills.

The plans continued and the operation grew. By midsummer they

were talking about ginning six thousand pounds of cotton per day at Mulberry Grove, and the next year to double the figure as the word spread about the new process.

The year 1794 was busy but serene. Miller & Whitney hired managers for the various ginneries—the business was getting on its feet. Late in the year they wrote to Secretary of State Randolph about changes in the gins, which they wanted to incorporate into the patent. Whitney stayed on during part of the summer, partly because he came down with malaria and was in bed for ten days. He returned to the factory in New Haven just in time for another outbreak of the yellow fever. It hit New Haven hard that year; the town was almost at a standstill and the postal services were interrupted for a time.

This assault by nature caused the factory to close down. Some of Whitney's workmen were sick. But from the South came Miller's demands for more and more gins. "Pray remember that we must have fifty to one hundred gins between this and another fall. . . ." he wrote Whitney that summer. And Whitney replied that he had raised a new barn for a factory, a building 26 feet by 20 feet. He would have it prepared before fall set in. Both men had high hopes. In a year or so, Miller wrote enthusiastically, they ought to see themselves well on the road to fortune.

With success so near to hand, Phineas Miller began to extend himself. Since they were doing very well, in cash and commitments, he now invested in a scheme called the Yazoo Land Purchase, which turned out to be a tremendous fraud on the public of Georgia and other states. Instead of getting rich quick—which was the object—Miller ended up holding worthless land titles and having to sue many others for money.

The Yazoo mistake cost Miller all the capital they had borrowed and saved for the cotton ginning expansion. It also cost the reputation of Miller & Whitney, because the Miller connection with the scandal was soon well known. And as if that was not enough, one day in March 1795 Whitney's shop in New Haven caught fire and burned to the ground.

Whitney did not despair. He began the laborious process of re-creating all the special tools and processes that he had established in the factory. He had lost seventeen gins that were nearly ready. Yet seven months later he shipped twenty-six machines to the South. Business was booming, and he seemed to have overcome the tremendous difficulties the fire had brought. But a new problem was rising even as they devoted the most heroic efforts to re-creation of the plant.

The patent was in trouble.

No invention stands unchallenged for long, and the cotton gin was no exception. Two years after the public learned that Whitney had perfected a reasonable way to remove cotton from the seeds, and clean it as well, competitors were already in action. Some planters were simply copying the gin and making one of their own "design." Some were using the principles and making their own. It was inevitable—the ginning process came to life at a time when the South was in financial trouble. The southern economy had been based on rice and a handful of other products. Intelligent men saw that they could take the gins, produce a hundred times more cotton with the labor of their slaves, and meet a world need that was growing annually with the improvement of the cloth-making processes in England and the development of world markets by the expansion of the British and French empires.

Miller had done an excellent job of publicizing the cotton gin, so good that half a dozen mechanics now boasted that they could build them. Had Miller & Whitney been able to meet the total needs of the South just then, they might have been spared much trouble in terms of patent suits.

They could not meet the need. The infringements began. Whitney and his partner initiated a long litigation against two of the most serious infringers on their machine: a group led by Edward Lyon that offered an "improved" version of the Whitney gin; and Hodgen Holmes, who had used the Whitney idea and created circular rims of iron instead of wires and called his machine the "Saw Gin."

By 1796 Miller & Whitney were feeling the discomfort of a harsh and unfriendly business world. Then came another blow. The English cotton buyers accepted the first shiploads of "upland" cotton under the misapprehension that it was the same stuff as the "longstaple," or Sea Island, cotton with the black seed. When the buyers discovered they had a product with a shorter fiber, they jumped to the conclusion that the ginning process had cut up the fibers, and soon they refused to buy, or discounted the upland cotton so heavily that the whole business structure of Miller & Whitney was threatened.

Miller wanted Whitney to go to England, give demonstrations, argue, and show the manufacturers that the gin was not responsible for the condition of the upland cotton. Whitney planned to go, he engaged passage on the sailing ship *Ganges*, and he tried desperately to get away—but he never did sail. The affairs of the company—the physical problems of the machines and of persuing the lawsuits—demanded his technical competence. By the time Whitney was ready to go to England, he and Miller did not have the cash to finance the trip. Their once imposing business plans had collapsed around them in a sea of

resentment and unfair competition. Friends in the South were commiserating with Miller because so promising an invention had failed completely.

The suit against Edward Lyon was lost in the spring of 1797. The judge told them afterward that until there was a change in the federal statutes regarding patents, they had no real protection of the invention.

But they continued to sue in other jurisdictions. Miller engaged in many other businesses—salting beef, selling land—and they borrowed from the Greene estate to support their activity.

Whitney turned to his other inventive fields, and Miller continued to expand into other areas. He went into a slaughterhouse business with Josiah Whitney, younger brother to Eli. He and Josiah also went into the timber business, furnishing live Georgia oak for northern naval shipyards. These were profitable enterprises; they would help support the extremely expensive business of litigation.

What different men were Miller and Whitney! Phineas Miller had taken to the genteel life of the South like a duck to water; he would marry Catherine Greene, the general's widow; he entertained well and handsomely, and Mulberry Grove became famous in the Savannah area for its hospitality.

Whitney was half in love with Catherine Greene himself, grateful to her for her offer of help to him when he was young and unknown, and taken by her winsomeness and patrician manner. But where Miller was a gentleman and a worldly fellow—skilled in the drawing room as well as in the counting house—Whitney was at home only in his workshop or laboratory, or at the drawing board. His education had permitted him to participate in polite society, but he was scarcely comfortable there.

Still, Eli Whitney was now a famous man, and in 1795 Yale conferred on him the degree of master of arts. Old President Stiles had seen the gin—Eli had gone to some pains to take the model destined for the patent office to the president to explain it fully. President Stiles had been much impressed, and when new President Timothy Dwight came to office one of Stiles' recommendations was that one son of Yale, Eli Whitney, be honored with a master's degree for his remarkable attainment. For no matter what happened in the suits, the fact of what was happening in the South proved that Eli Whitney had gone to the heart of a basic need. Everywhere cotton was becoming the major product of the South—and cotton was impossible to manage without the Whitney gin.

Probably Whitney was distraught about the forthcoming marriage of Miller and Catherine Greene—although there is no direct proof. Obviously he was distraught about the virtual failure of Miller &

Whitney, for as long as the idea could be pirated, nobody was applying to Miller & Whitney for the machines. Their whole plan was at a standstill. And worst of all, Whitney ran completely out of money. In September 1797, he tried to borrow some from Miller, and could not. He was near despair. He was thirty-two years old that autumn of 1797, lonely and wishing to get married. And he was miserable, as he wrote Miller: "... it is better not to live than to live as I have for three years past. Toil, anxiety, and disappointment have broken me down. My situation makes me perfectly miserable. ..."

He hated debt and he was swimming in it. He hated indecision, and indecision followed him everywhere. Until the air could be cleared for the invention, nothing could be certain. He loved the good name he had built, particularly in the intellectual community around New Haven, and he saw it threatened by his creditors and enemies. He was an unhappy man, and at this time he went into virtual seclusion, ignoring old friends on the street and refusing to answer letters or see those dear to him.

Examining his assets and liabilities, Whitney delved deep into that remarkable mind of his for a solution to his problems.

The liabilities were simple. He did not have the money to turn in a new direction. It was clear that the patent laws were wrong and must be corrected. This would take time. No one failed to give Eli Whitney credit for having thought up a most remarkable invention.

The assets were his brains and his good name.

So what was he to do?

The Whitney brain produced an idea: a highly improved printing press for postage stamps. He considered how he should proceed with this invention and he came to the conclusion that he should go into business with the government. What other agency or group or individual could better guarantee support of a financial venture? Whitney submitted this scheme to his friend Oliver Wolcott, one who had greeted the gin effusively in Philadelphia. Wolcott was now Secretary of the Treasury.

Unfortunately Wolcott was not a man to let friendship sway judgment in public affairs, and he turned down the Whitney proposal as expensive and unnecessary. Sadly enough Wolcott really did not pay any attention to the Whitney proposal; the opinion being not his own, but that of a dolt named John Chester, the postal supervisor, who was asked to see how it worked. He had no time for such ideas, said Chester, and that was that.

Reading the papers, Whitney learned that Congress was about to make new appropriations for arms for the government. The situation between the United States and France in particular was critical these

days—and war seemed imminent. Congress had been reluctant to establish large defense forces, or forces of almost any kind, but now it seemed the federal government was going to have to act in the common good.

Whitney sat down and wrote to Wolcott, offering to contract for the total armament of fifteen thousand soldiers. That meant he would supply a stand of arms for each man—a musket, a bayonet, a ramrod, a wiper, and a screwdriver. He could get the bonding necessary and the support, he said; could Wolcott intercede for him with the Department of War?

How disarmingly Whitney said it, for he was making one of the most unusual—and grandest—proposals in the history of the nation. No one had ever supplied even ten thousand stands of arms before. He could do it, he said. He had the waterpower to run his machines. He had the skilled men to manufacture almost anything made of iron and brass and wood and leather. He had no use for his factory at the moment—not a gin was being manufactured—and he wanted to keep it all together. It would be a relatively easy task to convert—if he had the promise of enough business.

In this, Eli Whitney displayed something else that was new in the world that year: his understanding that the basic processes of manufacture are readily transferred from one product to another. It was this ability a hundred and fifty years later that let Chrysler company make airplane parts, and other auto companies make tanks, and engineering companies build ships for World War II. But Whitney was not a creature of the modern world; the concept of the "assembly line" had not been invented. The whole mechanical process of production was almost individual effort, rather than manufacture at all.

To understand how completely revolutionary Eli Whitney's idea was, one must realize that he had never made a gun or a cartridge box. But he knew that the operations of assembling mechanical objects were all very much the same, and he was the first man in America to put that knowledge to practical use.

Where Whitney had been unlucky in the gin venture because the need was immediate and he could not fill it from his New Haven plant, now he was lucky for almost the same reason. Congress and the Adams administration were seriously worried about war, and they wanted a rush job on arms manufacture. "Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute" was the watchword. The newspapers were filled with stories of French outrages on the high seas; the public talked in the taverns of war at any moment. Congress rushed to vote nearly a million dollars for arms. Whitney's proposal came in to the administration at precisely the right moment: President Adams and Secretary of War

Pickering were worried as to how they would supply the arms in a hurry from a Springfield armory that had made only 245 muskets in two years since it was established. By scouring the markets of Europe, American agents had been able to find only 7,000 muskets and they needed 50,000.

So Eli Whitney was the right man in the right place at the right time. Wolcott replied favorably to his letter and advised him to hurry down to Philadelphia and discuss the matter with high authority. He arrived on May 24, 1798, and on June 14 he had a contract to deliver ten thousand stands of arms. For this he would be paid $134,000.

There need be no more talk of bankruptcy and ruin. Just as affairs had conspired to cast Eli Whitney into despair a few months earlier, now affairs turned to his favor, and the world had never looked brighter than it did as he set out on the ship-coach route that would carry him back to New Haven.

He took with him a pair of the famous Charleville muskets. Ironically, in view of the crisis between America and France, these guns were made in France and sent to the infant republic in 1777—23,000 of them—to be instrumental in the American ability to keep on fighting and thus wear down the British. They would be Whitney's prototype for weapons that might be used against the French.

These guns were made to order, that is, they were made by the old gunsmith's art of taking each piece of one gun and fitting it to the others. This is by far the finest method of manufacturing—the tender care of the master mechanic in honing and fitting shows itself in the operation, be it gun or clock or other device. There were relatively few misfires or mishaps with the Charleville musket.

Eli Whitney soon had the guns apart on his work table, and saw the little differences that showed the mechanic's skills. They were fine weapons. Yet Whitney knew very well that he could never produce to his schedule if he followed the practice of the French gunsmiths. He had to tool up, get his workmen to produce four thousand muskets, bayonets, ramrods and all the rest of the parts, by September 30, 1799, and the other six thousand by the end of the following September. That meant the use of methods yet untried, methods he had intended to use in the production of the cotton gin if the hundreds and even thousands of gins that were supposedly necessary had ever come to order as he and Miller once dreamed they would.

Eli Whitney had five thousand dollars cash in his pocket, but he was not to have another advance against the contract until he was ready to begin manufacturing. Then he could collect another five thousand. There would be no more money until he had produced a thousand stands of arms, and then he could get still another five thousand.

Going to his drawing board, he sat down to begin planning a whole new series of special tools that could be used for the specific purpose of producing muskets in quantity. He already knew his gun parts would have to be interchangeable if he was to succeed in his great undertaking. That would be an asset because it would make it possible for easy repair of a broken musket rather than sending it to a gunsmith to make a special part.

All over the country, when the practicing gunsmiths learned of the Eli Whitney contract they cursed and said the fool would fail. Anyone knew that nobody could build so many weapon so quickly. The proof was there: twenty-six other contractors were making guns for the worried government; altogether the twenty-six were making only thirty thousand guns, and this wild fellow proposed to make a third as many all by himself.

Whitney set out to get his materials and his men. He planned to train armorers who would then do his work. He used iron from the works up in Salisbury, Connecticut, a plant which had once been owned by Ethan Allen. But he could not get enough of it. This iron was particularly adapted for gun barrels, a fact that was apparent to one Charles Loveland of the town of Canaan, near Salisbury. The canny Loveland traded in the iron, secured a virtual monopoly of the Salisbury furnace's output, and bargained with Whitney. He would not sell Whitney the iron in bulk, but he would sell him musket barrels—rods welded but not bored or finished. And after some dickering, Whitney saw that time was against him, the yellow fever epidemic and its aftermath were causing him trouble, and so Mr. Loveland became one of the first subcontractors, delivering the ten thousand barrels to New Haven for Whitney's guns.

One difficulty followed another. Whitney soon became short of money again. He had trouble finding a suitable factory. His workmen, driven from the area by the fever, were not available. But he persevered. He bought Sabin's mill and stream rights above Neck Bridge, which had a fine flow of water from Mill River all year around.

In January 1799 he had the first big building finished, a workshop 72 feet long and 30 feet wide, two stories high. He opened a boarding house for his unmarried employees. And as he put together the factory he had a fine piece of news: a Yale man, Captain Decius Wadsworth, had been chosen by the ordnance people to inspect the new weapons for efficiency. Wadsworth was a friend of Miller's.

In the spring of 1799 Secretary Wolcott wrote, asking what progress Whitney was making, since the arms would be due soon. In Cabinet meetings the administration was showing concern about the weapons; the nations of Europe were so busily feuding and preparing

to fight that they would not sell any arms to speak of; France and England needed the guns for their struggle against each other.

Whitney had to reply. He stalled and he wrote and rewrote his reply, but in the end he had to send word that he was behind schedule. He spoke of the bad weather, which had stopped his construction work too early, raised the price of foodstuffs and nearly all else, and made animal feed leap in price. His toolmakers up north were not supplying the basic tools he needed to make his special machines. They, too, had been hurt by winter's long blast this year.

He was having credit problems and cash flow problems. He could get credit for sixty days after delivery without trouble, but then the difficulties began. Interest rates were charged monthly, and they were high—sometimes as much as 4 percent per month. He had to take every penny of cash he could scratch from anywhere and pay off those creditors before they bankrupted him with their interest charges.

Whitney's excuses were not welcomed in Philadelphia. He had made big promises, and suddenly he was indicating that he needed more time and more money before he could fulfill them. Although Captain Wadsworth had visited New Haven in the ensuing months and liked what he saw, now even he began to have doubts about the man in New Haven. The grumbling in the capital began, but did not grow too loud because everyone knew the need for these guns was so immediate that even if it seemed Whitney was failing to perform as promised, he at least promised more than anyone else at an hour of need.

Whitney said he needed more money. Wolcott agreed to provide an additional $1,500, which staved the creditors off again. It was not enough to solve the problem, but the government would advance no more cash without additional security. Whitney then traded on his good name and his Yale connections: he found ten prominent New Haven citizens who would put their names to a bond, and this brought a further advance of $10,000 to continue the work. Inherent in the arrangement was recognition that the delivery dates could not be met.

But bad luck was piling up. Secretary Wolcott became involved in the political and theoretical struggle between President John Adams and Alexander Hamilton over the direction in which the nation should move to bestow the power of government. In November 1800, Wolcott resigned from the government, and thus Whitney lost the best friend he had in high position, and one of his major supporters in what some called the "mad scheme" to produce arms in great quantity.

Friends in the new government capital at Washington told him it was imperative that he come there, put in an appearance, and justify all that he was doing; otherwise he might lose entirely the support that was now becoming tenuous.

Armed with letters from arms inspector Wadsworth, and other experts on guns, carrying samples of his workmanship and the parts he was going to produce, Whitney headed south. Arriving in the raw capital at Washington, he found that Wolcott was still there, if out of power. Elizur Goodrich, one of the ten New Haven leaders who had signed the Whitney bond, was there too, serving temporarily as a congressman. Whitney was not yet without friends, friends with influence.

Most important, however, was the demonstration he intended to make. He had to convince the government leaders that although he was slow in performing, he knew what he was about, and that his slowness was God's will—the weather—and not incompetence.

Whitney went around the capital. He exhibited his work and plans to President Adams, to the head of the War Department and the Treasury, and to congressmen, and others. They were fine arms. Whitney had personally supervised their manufacture. They made Adams and the others proud. They were better than the foreign products that were trickling in. They were better than the run of the domestic guns that were being sold.

Thomas Jefferson was in Washington, having returned from a mission to France and England. He was particularly impressed with Whitney's plans for interchangeable parts, and said only one other manufacturer in the world, a Frenchman named LeBlanc, had produced anything at all like this idea and the Frenchman's plan was not nearly so definitive as Whitney's. Jefferson had tried to bring the Frenchman to the United States, but the French government had heard of his ploy and immediately commandeered the man's services. It was all moot anyhow—the Frenchman had since died, leaving Eli Whitney as the most sagacious manufacturer of arms in the world, with his plan for assembling guns in mass.

Jefferson bubbled with enthusiasm over Whitney's work. He already respected Whitney for the idea and performance of the cotton gin. But this new idea was of far more importance to the government.

The United States was in trouble because the colonies, when they came together, were so fearful of the police power after their British experience that they cut away the grounds of defense from the new government. Now they were paying for this deficiency, and anything that would speed the coming of adequate funds for defense was to be welcomed. Free men must have arms to stay free, the government was learning.

Jefferson offered great largesse: he personally would write to Governor James Monroe at Richmond and secure an appointment and contract for Whitney to deliver as many arms as he wished to the

Virginia state government. Virginia had just voted to arm its militia at state expense—every man was to be given a musket. But where would the guns come from?

Whitney slowed the red-headed Virginian down. He was grateful, he said, for the confidence. Still, he could do nothing for Virginia until after he had delivered the arms to the United States as promised.

But what an evening it was! Jefferson, smiling and talking animatedly about what he had seen in Europe and expressing his willing admiration for Whitney; the general talk about manufactures and what might be done in many fields, using the Whitney procedures. It was exciting, heady talk, and it confirmed Whitney's good opinion of his own works. More, it confirmed the opinions of his friends that Whitney was on the right track and could truly do what he said he could do.

The secret of Whitney's demonstration, was its visibility. He had with him a box of parts of the locks—the contrivance that fired the musket by igniting powder. He would empty the box on the table, and ask his viewers to take parts at random and fit them together. Thus, without a word, he showed the interchangeability of the parts of his guns. Could any man fail to be impressed with so simple and yet so cunning an idea?

One man was not much impressed. Whitney wanted more money—that was one reason for his journey, and after the success in selling his wares to the President and Cabinet ministers, it became the overriding reason. The stumbling block was Samuel Dexter, the man who had replaced Wolcott as Secretary of the Treasury. Besides an innate conservatism, Dexter had the problem of safeguarding the treasury, and the disadvantage of not having been involved in the proposition from the beginning.

Thus in a long letter to Dexter, Eli Whitney had to explain his life's history and his theories and practice in manufacturing the gin and now the guns.

Whitney wanted more money, an advance totaling $30,000, and five years in which to deliver. He got these, with grudging assent from Dexter, who feared that events were moving too fast for him.

But all was resolved soon, because over the years Whitney had made a powerful friend in Jefferson, and Jefferson was now President. One of Jefferson's early acts was to transfer the business of armament procurement from the Treasury Department to the War Department—which successive governments have confirmed as the proper place for such specialized buying.

In June of 1801, the government had grown restless. It had paid out some $30,000 in advances to Eli Whitney for muskets and had not

received a single gun for the money. Secretary of War Henry Dearborn wrote Whitney about it, asking what he proposed to do. Whitney wrote back, explaining again that it was not a question of producing *a gun*, but a flow of guns. And in September the flow was started. Whitney delivered five hundred muskets to the government, all finished and boxed. They were inspected, approved, and the assembly line manufacture—it could not be called anything else—was in operation for the first time in America.

All was going well in the arms business.

In the cotton ginning business there had been some significant developments since Eli Whitney had retreated to New Haven in such low spirits a few years before. Phineas Miller had been pursuing the political aspects of the problem—for there was where the secret lay. Congress had not brought them any relief from the loose wording of the patent laws that obviated the whole purpose of patents. Except for the Whitney invention, there were not enough difficulties to bring Congress to the proper frame of mind as yet, government running then, as later, behind the facts and well behind the people. Miller had many friends among planters in the South, and planters were beginning to govern that section of the country as they wished. So Miller had addressed himself to the various state legislatures on the problem of patent and the gin. The truth was that a great number of shoddy imitations of the Whitney product were on the market and they were not doing the job properly. Planters were being cheated by manufacturers and by ginners alike. There was considerable disappointment, and a case could be made for the Whitney product—which everyone agreed was an excellent piece of manufactury.

All Miller's machinations were now beginning to bear fruit. He had a scheme up before the South Carolina legislature that fall under which the state would *buy*, for the state and its people, the Whitney patent right to the machine for cleaning cotton. The state then would license or give away the right as it chose.

Whitney was not pleased with the idea. He thought Miller & Whitney ought to continue its course, and that eventually right would triumph and they would collect hundreds of thousands of dollars in South Carolina alone for the violation of his patent rights. But Miller, the hard-headed businessman, insisted that Eli Whitney stop whatever he was doing in New Haven and make an appearance at Columbia, where the legislature was meeting.

Whitney and Miller were friends, notwithstanding a coolness that had developed over the years, partly because of the Yazoo land speculation and its effects on Miller & Whitney; and partially for

personal reasons. It could not have been easy for Whitney to accept the hard lot he had chosen; scrabbling for the money on which to live and dream, while Miller lived the life of a patrician gentleman on the southern plantation and married the woman of whom they were both extremely fond.

The inventor was distraught. He knew that he should be exerting his every effort at his assembly line to get those muskets out. Had not Jefferson told him that the gun market was his for the taking? But his heart was in the cotton gin too, and he had suffered so many blows from ignoble men that he could not pass up a chance to strike back and to recover some of the loss to prestige and pocket that had come about through the failure of the gin's marketing program.

By this time the British manufacturers had begun to learn the differences between upland and Sea Island cotton, and the old claims that the Whitney gin wrecked the cotton were matters of the past that manufacturers found it best to forget. The southern cotton growers wanted that gin, and Miller insisted that Whitney come down and make it possible to deal with them on the new terms.

Whitney traveled to Washington by boat and carriage once again and spent the first week of November there. He had several interviews with President Jefferson, who commended the interchangeable gun-lock and suggested to Governor Monroe that Virginia might be interested.

It was a courtesy call, made to let the President know what Whitney was doing so that when the reports seeped north no one in Washington could say that arms maker Whitney was not paying attention to business. That accomplished, Whitney headed south and was soon in Columbia. He made sure he met most of the members of the legislature and answered as many questions as he was able. He carried with him testimonials from Jefferson and James Madison, the Secretary of State. Since these two Virginians were honored throughout the South, the letters were valuable.

Before long, Whitney presented the legislature with a memorial, asking for $100,000 for the right of citizens of South Carolina to use the patent. There was some negotiation, and in the end the legislature offered $50,000. Whitney was not satisfied. He wrote a long letter to his old friend Josiah Stebbins back in Connecticut, telling him how badly used Miller & Whitney were by the South Carolinians. He could expect hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of sales if the people would buy his machine. It was almost criminal to settle for $50,000. But the fact was that he did not have the hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of orders, and the $50,000 was real.

Whitney realized that with the South Carolina settlement at least they could almost be assured of some similar consideration by the rest of the cotton states.

"It establishes a precedent which will be valuable," he wrote Stebbins, "as it respects our collections in other states, and I think there is now a fair prospect that I shall in the event realize property enough to render me comfortable, and in some measure independent."

Hardly elated, then, but now relatively satisfied with achievement of a new avenue that might lead to success with the gin, Eli Whitney returned to New Haven to continue his work on the arms production line. Again he stopped in Washington, and this time he secured further approval of delay in delivery of his guns, and another infusion of capital to help him get the gun plant properly in operation to deliver large quantities.

Until now, it had seemed all uphill. The terrible struggle with the gin had nearly exhausted both Whitney and Miller. The uncertainties and the waiting in the dealings with the government had been difficult. But by 1802, when he was thirty-seven years old, Eli Whitney was a wealthy man, and there was no reason in the world that he should ever worry again about failure. His method was the important thing, and he knew it was right.

There were to be some troubles, however. Scattershop manufacturers of the gins all over the South protested when they learned of the settlement of the South Carolina legislature. Other gun makers went to Washington to complain about the favoritism given this man from New Haven, who promised so much and delivered so slowly. But Whitney went back down to Washington. He sought an audience of the highest government officials, and he laid his big box on the table. Before this assemblage of statesmen, cigar-shewing politicians, and generals, he put out ten musket barrels, ten stocks, ten triggers, ten pans, and ten of each and every little part of the musket. He then turned to a general and suggested that he pick at random a piece from each pile and put them all together on one side of the table. Whitney then assembled a complete musket from these random pieces.

Anyone could understand what that meant.

But Whitney went further. He took all the pieces and made ten separate muskets of them, just to show that any combination of the pieces, in the right order, could produce a musket.

All this was made possible through the use of the jig, which, if Eli Whitney did not invent, he turned into an instrument of mass production. By tracing a single handmade model, the jig could make piece

after piece that met the specifications, and as quickly as the machinist could work. This was mass production.*

With this mass production, and its improvement all the way, and his repetitive machines that were growing better every day, the system of interchangeable parts was working faster and faster. In December 1802, Whitney negotiated a new sale of his gin patent right with North Carolina: the legislature taxed every gin in the state for five years, and after taking out collection costs paid the residue to Miller & Whitney. A similar arrangement was soon worked out with Tennessee.

Georgia, the state where it had all begun, was one of the last states to settle with Miller & Whitney over the troubles of the gin. In 1803 Phineas Miller died and the matter was still not settled. Sometimes Whitney wondered if it ever would be. New trouble arose in South Carolina; the payments were stopped. Whitney went there and was arrested and thrown into jail for a time, until he could appear before the legislature, shame the gentlemen of that body, and secure all that he had lost.

The South Carolina jailing, it seems, was the work of enemies in Georgia, where the last battle was to be fought. Soon the talk was around the South that Georgia alone among the southern states was run by crooks who would do an honest inventor out of his legitimate profits. That kind of talk hurt those southern gentlemen who valued honor above all else, and in 1806 the court judgments began to go Whitney's way.

Judge William Johnson of the high court of Georgia had the last say on the subject, in a decision in December 1806. He pointed out that this invention almost alone had changed the lives of southerners (white), it had relieved the depression into which the states had fallen at the end of the revolution, it had brought new life and prosperity to the South. And Georgia had led all other states in denigrating the man who had made it all possible. Judge Johnson examined the various imitations of the gin, saw that they were indeed imitations, and said so. He awarded the verdict to Eli Whitney.

That was the end of the problem of the gin. In fact, the patents had only fourteen years life altogether in those days, and by the time he won there were less than half a dozen years to go. He did win, the invention was brought back to honor, the legal bills were all paid, and Eli Whitney began to reap some profits from the cotton gin.

Also, having perfected his manufacturing procedure, Whitney

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*If you put down a twenty-five cent piece and draw its outline, you have used a jig.

could make as many guns of interchangeable parts as anyone might want.

The Whitney business kept growing better. The federal government tried to get him to take over the armory at Harper's Ferry and build guns for the government only. He did not have to consider seriously such offers these days. He was expanding. In 1808 he began manufacturing arms for New York as well, and then for Connecticut.

He still had problems keeping so large a factory going. The federal government tried to help—offered a contract to make sabres and scabbards—but the generals simply did not understand the manufacturing process: that it would take months to tool up to get an assembly line going to make those instruments, and there was not enough demand for them to make it worthwhile to set up the special facilities needed. *Mass production* to fill *mass needs*—this was the reward and the goal that drove Eli Whitney onward, seeking more and more contracts to use the same machinery and methods and make the investment profitable.

It was profitable. Whitney went into the China trade, his factor and advisor being Oliver Wolcott, the New York banker who had been his friend and supporter in the lean years when the gin was in trouble and the gun contract was merely a dream. They invested in banks, in trading goods, in fire insurance companies—all of them fine speculations that could make a man rich around 1810. (A good piece of the foundation of the Morgan banking fortune came from Hartford fire insurance.) Around the turn of the century Whitney was worrying about money in hundreds of dollars to pay his creditors, ten years later he was owner of a ship, and thought nothing of spending $15,000 on a speculation. He was the principal arms manufacturer of America, and his gin was bringing in a nice income, too.

On June 8, 1812, the United States declared war on Great Britain. On June 29, Eli Whitney wrote the Secretary of War inquiring about a new gun contract, and three weeks later he signed an agreement to produce fifteen thousand muskets, at $13 a musket, which was indeed a fair price and allowed him a profit of several dollars on each gun.

Now came a new complication in the Whitney affairs.

During the previous few years Captain Callendar Irvine of the United States Army had been serving as superintendent of military stores. Irvine became acquainted with Marine Wickham, a man in Philadelphia who had an idea about a new gun. The standard musket in use was still the Charleville musket, with some changes; for example, under the new contract, Whitney was to make muskets with 40-inch barrels. Wickham and Irvine watched with envy as Whitney had

prospered, and Wickham declared that he could build a better musket. So he set to work, financed partly by Captain Irvine.

The musket they came up with had no important changes except that the bayonet was fixed to the barrel by means of a screw instead of a bracket. It was hardly worth talking about.

But no sooner had war come than Captain Irvine made a visit to the Springfield Armory in connection with his duties. When Irvine learned there that Eli Whitney had secured a large contract to deliver muskets, he was displeased. He told the master armorer that this was indeed bad luck because he and Wickham were in business and they had hoped to get a contract for their musket.

War brought some rapid promotions in the services, and Irvine's was one. On August 8 he was made commissary general of purchases, largely, through his personal influence with General John Armstrong. Irvine then began to plan. His first move was to discredit the current manufacturers of muskets. He chose Eli Whitney, the biggest of them all.

Irvine's efforts were aimed at securing control of all facets of the procurement of weapons, from the allocation of funds to the selection of contractors to the inspection of the weapons. If he could do this, then he could easily enough supplant all existing weapons in new contracts with the Wickham model. The Wickham Company could then secure as much business as it could handle and demand patent payments from all other manufacturers for the use of the invention.

But to do this, the best weapons available—those produced by Eli Whitney's firm—must be shown to be inferior.

Captain Irvine, soon to become colonel, set out to destroy Eli Whitney.

This plan first called for the ousting of Tench Coze, the purveyor of public supplies, with whom Whitney had been dealing for some time. In January 1813, General Armstrong was appointed Secretary of War to replace William P. Eustis. General Armstrong, Irvine's friend, relied on his associates to tell him what to do.

Soon Coze was gone—his office dissolved by the new Commissary General of Purchases, Colonel Irvine. Next target was Colonel Decius Wadsworth, the chief of the Ordnance Department. Irvine had to get rid of him to forward the scheme, for Wadsworth was an incorruptible man. The tactic was to make Wadsworth look incompetent, and the means was to overload musket barrels until they burst in test, and then to blame the ordnance men for failing to make them strong enough. Through such "tests," in a short time Irvine had managed completely to undermine the faith of the Secretary of War in the Ordnance Department.

Having done this much, Irvine went after the contractors. He was too cautious to hit Whitney directly. He went after a small contractor in Pennsylvania named Joseph Henry, who took exception to Irvine's manner and his ambitions. Soon Irvine had the Secretary of War believing that the contractors were not supplying the government with good weapons, and that the best method was to set up a new system of armories, much expanded, and let Colonel Irvine operate the whole system. That system would then make it easy for Irvine to introduce the Wickham musket, and his fortune would be assured.

If there was one fault in the Whitney operation after all these years of dealing with the federal government, it was a certain carelessness as to delivery dates. Under the new Whitney arms contract, five hundred muskets were to be delivered on May 1. That day came and went, and so did the first of June. No muskets. Irvine waited until the end of June and then he tried to get the Secretary of War to cancel the contracts with the army's largest supplier. That done, he would be able to move quickly, for he was certain that the highest authorities would then panic and demand the immediate consolidation of gun manufacture.

Eli Whitney heard of this move. He hurried to Philadelphia to see Irvine, and believed he had convinced him that the moment he finished a New York contract he would begin deliveries. But Irvine was only playing at being convinced, as Whitney learned when he sent a model musket that fall and received an insulting and complaining letter from Irvine.

The battle was joined then. Whitney answered all the complaints, and if any were justified, he made changes in his manufacturing processes. Irvine sat still and refused to accept or to pay.

Whitney was ill at the time, but he was not going to quit without a fight.

In the next letter, Irvine demanded the government's money be returned, with interest, and voided the contract.

Whitney bridled. He warned friends in Washington, and suddenly Irvine discovered that Whitney *had* friends. The officer began to back off a little, changed his course and tried to get Congress to do the dirty work. He wanted Congress to pass a law putting all guns under a single superintendent. But in the Senate was David Daggett, a man who had known Jefferson, a man who had signed the original bond of Eli Whitney to be an arms manufacturer. Daggett made short work of Irvine in the Senate. The bill failed.

Irvine now tried to freeze Whitney out. He refused to answer letters. He would not send an inspector to look over the supply of weapons ready to be delivered. He thought the battle was nearly won.

Only a little more effort and he would have control, the Wickham musket would become the national weapon, and Irvine would have his fortune.

Neither General Armstrong nor Colonel Irvine seemed to understand that the business of a military man was to fight the country's wars, and not become involved in its politics or its economics. General Armstrong was a fool. Irvine seemed to have become totally blinded by his power, and he determined to destroy Whitney and the arms system.

Whitney knew what was happening. In May he went to Washington, armed with letters of praise from New York State for the muskets he had just delivered. But Irvine had already convinced the Secretary of War to investigate Whitney's accounts. Whitney's contract was to be voided, said the Secretary.

A jubilant Irvine began to celebrate too soon. Whitney had come with a demand that the thousand weapons he had on hand be inspected and then accepted and paid for if they met the test. When he was rebuffed by Secretary Armstrong, who reported that the investigation must proceed, Whitney went to see Secretary of State James Monroe, who took Whitney to see President Madison, who remembered him. As a result of their meeting, Secretary Armstrong was rebuked and ordered to pay the $5,000 due, and to send a man to inspect the muskets posthaste.

The furious Colonel Irvine, contravened in his attempt to seize power, sent no less an emissary than his business partner, Marine Wickham, to inspect the guns for the government.

Wickham, of course, did not like the guns. How could he like them? But Wickham did not know Whitney knew that he and Irvine were in collusion. The "inspector" allowed himself to lose his temper and to warn Whitney that Irvine would go to any lengths to get his way.

In a sense, Irvine can be pitied. Any man who can move from the office of the Secretary of War, having been denied justice there, and go to the Secretary of State and then to the President—such a man was best left undisturbed if he was committing no wrong. But Irvine was dazzled by his own apparent power, and by the complaisance of the Secretary of War. So close and yet so far!

Inspector Wickham must stand his ground. The inspector began using excessive power charges and blowing up Whitney muskets, as he had planned to do.

Whitney's anger was aroused, and Whitney was not above dealing harshly with his enemies. He would not communicate with Wickham except by writing. At one time they were in the same hotel

and he would not see him or talk to him. They parted enemies, and Wickham went back to report to his partner that things were not going well.

Whitney now began to strike back. He brought Decius Wadsworth back into the scene—Wadsworth had been nearly but not quite destroyed—and the ordnance man's assurances about the Whitney musket were well respected by Monroe and Madison.

A long and vituperative correspondence ensued, with Irvine trying to take every advantage of his own position and General Armstrong's ignorance of ordnance in order to denigrate Whitney.

The quarrel was resolved, finally, swiftly, and forcefully. General Armstrong had been paying approximately the same attention to all his duties as Secretary of War that he paid to the musket question, and the department had fallen into the hands of his cronies—many of them incompetent.

A harsh indictment? The proof came in August 1814, when the British marched into Washington and burned the city. General Armstrong's men were unable to put up more than a token defense against a small raiding party.

That disaster meant the end of General Armstrong. He was fired as Secretary of War, and James Monroe came in to rebuild the military forces.

Irvine's chance was gone. He had no influence with Monroe. He would have to prove his case with facts, and he knew that he could not deny the efficacy of the Whitney musket, with facts. Those muskets were delivered and they proved out as Whitney had known they would. Irvine was thoroughly deflated and soon stripped of his power. Congress, determined to avoid any future abuse of power by the military, created new regulations, putting military armories and contracts under the Ordnance Department and out of the hands of purchasing officers.

Whitney sent his whole file of correspondence with Irvine to President Madison and asked him to read it. Madison did read it. Irvine exited to the obscurity he deserved. He never came to prominence again, nor did Marine Wickham. Nor did anyone hear again of their scheme. As for the Wickham carbine, after a year or so, nobody around Washington could even remember what it was.

The Irvine affair established Eli Whitney's arms plant as beyond peer in America, although it was a long time before proper recognition began to come from abroad. One day in 1851, when Whitney had been succeeded by weapons manufacturers Simeon North and Samuel Colt, a delegation of British army officers called at the London International Exposition and observed an exhibit of American rifles.

They had not paid much attention to American rifles—nobody had claimed the American army guns were the best in the world. But an observant member of the band of officers noticed one thing: these guns were made so that all the parts were interchangeable. After a few minutes' conversation with the exhibition's representative, the facts were confirmed, and several excited British officers went back to headquarters to report on this "new development" in arms manufacture. That was twenty-six years after the death of Eli Whitney. The change the discovery made was immediate and worldwide: the famous British Enfield manufacturing plant was geared over to the Whitney way, and soon the Whitney system was being called the "American system" all over the world. Of course, North had added to it. So had Colt, but the basic idea of the assembly line, and the proof of it all came from Eli Whitney.

Whitney continued to improve his methods in 1815, as he was extricated from the Irvine affair. Soon he went into a series of meetings with the heads of ordnance of the United States government, and out of these meetings came a pattern for the American musket. For the first time, after this pattern was devised, a real standard was established. Before this time, only the manufacturer of a particular musket, or a skilled gunsmith, could repair a broken gun. Whitney and the ordnance officials sought to make all parts from all manufacturers interchangeable, and by and large they succeeded in this endeavor. It was Whitney alone among the manufacturers who held the respect and admiration of the government. They came to him.

By this time Whitney had invented a milling machine to turn musket barrels much more quickly, cheaply, and accurately than had been done before. But he hesitated to put it on the market and seek a patent. He had been burned badly by the gin affair and did not want another invention stolen and used against him. So for ten years he kept the invention virtually a secret, using it only in his own factory.

There were many other developments, some of them inventions, which speeded the assembly line for Whitney arms and improved the quality of the guns.

Perhaps the most sincere tribute to Whitney's genius came in 1819, when John H. Hall was given a contract to manufacture a breech-loading rifle of his own invention—obviously a great improvement over the muzzle-loading musket if it could be manufactured efficiently. The arsenal at Harper's Ferry gave Hall a contract and more—all the supplies and tools of the arsenal were at his disposal to work out his system. And the system at the American government armories was the Whitney system, for he had been working for twenty

years with the government on the interchangeability of parts and the assembly line.

The rifle was coming along, but around 1820 it still was not perfected, and Whitney was still contracting for the old-fashioned muskets that were standard military equipment. During these years he dealt with the great figures of the day: Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and John C. Calhoun, who was Secretary of War for a time.

For years Whitney was at least half in love with Catherine Greene Miller. He did not marry until he was fifty-one years old. From time to time in his youth he complained that he had no money for marriage, but after the arms contracts were established this was no longer true. His affections were in such a complicated state that it is not remarkable that he did not marry until late in life.

In 1817 he married Henrietta Edwards in Bridgeport. She was thirty-one years old, the daughter of an old friend of Whitney's. Catherine was dead and that said it all.

He lived as a Yale gentleman ought in these years, in a big house not far from New Haven, with expensive horses to draw his carriages, and had no trouble sending his nephews to college. There was none of the shortage of money that had bedevilled the Whitneys of Westborough.

Soon he was spending more time at home, for he was a kindly and devoted family man, and business no longer called him so strongly as once it had. He brought his nephew Eli Whitney Blake into the arms plant, and occupied himself with his financial affairs, which included complex settlement of the partnership with Miller and many claims in the South arising from the strange manner of development of the cotton gin once he had invented and perfected it.

In January 1821, Eli Whitney, Jr., was born (really Eli III) but this was almost the last great happiness of Whitney's life, for from that time on he was constantly plagued with bad health. From his sick bed his fertile brain continued to turn out inventions: a flexible catheter, which suggested part of his own illness; a bureau that locked wholly by the insertion of a key in the top drawer only; and half a dozen other devices. The army's ordnance people kept coming to him with their manufacturing problems, and generally he was able to help, even though he could no longer travel to the factories.

In November of 1824 he grew sicker, becoming worse in December. Then, on January 8, 1825, Eli Whitney died. The factory, however, lived on, and was managed by relatives and professionals until young Eli Whitney, Jr., grew up and was able to take over.

After the war with Mexico young Whitney undertook a contract

with Sam Colt to build the basic parts for a thousand Colt pistols. Colt was protecting his invention against all comers, having learned how ineffectual the patent laws could be, so he did not turn over the assembly to Whitney's plant, but took his parts, and some made elsewhere, and assembled them himself. But Colt, like all the others, was using the Whitney technique of the interchangeability of parts.

The young Eli was a competent manufacturer and the Whitney plant at Whitneyville prospered as long as muskets were needed. But Eli Whitney, the son of the inventor, did not share his father's mechanical genius in any way. The father, seeing how the trend was toward revolving pistols and breech-loading rifles, would have put himself to inventing a fine specimen of his own and then manufacturing it. Eli dealt with Colt, tried to "sharper" him, as many a manufacturer would be doing in those years just before the Civil War, and ended up becoming Colt's enemy and losing the business altogether.

By this time, the world remembered Eli Whitney very largely as the shadowy figure who had invented the cotton gin and thus was given credit by social historian Hinton Rowan Helper for setting up the conditions that would lead to civil war. Sam Colt's biographers tried to take for Colt the title as inventor of the assembly line and modern manufacturing. So nearly forgotten was the inventive genius for his own work that several of these Colt biographers mistakenly wrote that Colt quarreled with Eli Whitney—not realizing that it was the son and not the great inventor. And only in the 1970s was a new study begun to show Whitney's unique contribution to the development of industry. He was the progenitor of the modern method of manufacturing; his genius is to be seen today in the methods of such industrial giants as U.S. Steel, Ford, and General Motors Corporation. His story looms large in the coming to greatness of the American people.

And hidden in the Whitney story is one of the great anomalies of American history. For it was Eli Whitney who created the machine that changed the economy of the South. Before Whitney, the planters were a land-poor lot, unable for the most part to grow the product most suited to the red clay and other difficult soils of the southern delta and plainsland. Whitney's cotton gin made the South seem rich; it enabled cotton planters to utilize their land more profitably than ever before, and to establish a new economic pride. But the whole was based on the abundance of human labor—the slaves. Consequently, the perfection of the cotton gin increased both the value and the extent of slavery in the southern states of America. Then came into play the second great Whitney "invention"—the assembly line. This change in manufacturing method was quickly adopted in the northern states and brought

about the manufacturing prowess of New England and the Middle States. As a result, the North quickly outstripped the growing South in economic importance. The change frightened the South, and made the North ever stronger, and the economic struggle was joined, eventually to spread to the battlefield. More than any other man, Eli Whitney had a part in both developments.

2/ The Men Who Dreamed of Railroads

The Massachusetts descendents of John Whitney did the best they could with the rocky land they found open to them. Not all, by far, became rich or famous; the telephone directories of the Bay State communities are filled with Whitneys who are clerks and plumbers, machine operators and businessmen. So the Whitney family is a mixture of talent and mediocrity. Yet the principle holds: the talent shown in the Whitney line has been remarkable throughout the history of America.

The next Whitney after Eli to attract national attention was Asa, who was born in Townsend, Massachusetts, in the winter of 1791, as Eli Whitney was finishing up at Yale. Asa never knew his cousin Eli, their worlds were miles apart, for Asa was the son of the local blacksmith at Townsend. He spent his early childhood on the farm behind the smithy, taking care of the cattle and the sheep and swine, and helping his father shoe horses, repair carriage wheels, and make wagons for the farmers around the territory.

There was no question of higher education for this Whitney. By the time young Asa was twelve he had finished his meager education in the local school and was spending his full time as his father's assistant in the blacksmith shop. The hard times of the War of 1812 caused the flow of work to ebb, and Asa began searching outward for employment. There were enough children in the family that he need not stay home and tend the farm longer; it was not large enough to support both the boy and his expectations, and his father's family.

So he headed north into the New Hampshire country, looking for opportunity and supporting himself by working for a smith here, a wheelwright there, or a wagon maker in the next town.

Oddly enough, Asa Whitney's opportunity came, indirectly, through the courtesy of his rich cousin Eli. After the success of Eli's invention was ensured, Asa went to work for a firm in New Hampshire that built machinery to make cotton cloth.

How quickly the gin had done its work: Eli had gone south only in

1792, had been secretive for a year or so, and then come out with his invention. In a short time cotton growing had so swept the South that the shrewd northerners had seen the coming of a new industrial market and begun to prepare. Up in the hill and high water country of New Hampshire, several firms were organized to make machinery for the new spinning and weaving mills, and Asa Whitney, as a blacksmith and a handy man with tools, was trusted by one of these companies to accompany a shipment of machinery down to a new cotton mill being built at Brownsville in New York's Mohawk Valley. He went, he liked the town, and he stayed. He was nineteen years old, and it was time he settled down.

Asa Whitney then decided he would spend the rest of his life in Brownsville, and he opened his own blacksmith shop there. He married Clarinda Williams and they had three sons and two daughters. Life was hard because there were several smiths in town, and the people favored the ones they knew. So Asa Whitney surveyed his situation again and saw that he could do best by specializing in the manufacture of wheels and axles for carriages and wagons. Wheels became his business. He established a firm to do work with them and was quite successful. For with the Whitney ingenuity, he managed to find ways to make better axles; ones that required less grease, ones whose parts fitted together more solidly and thus created less friction to slow the carts and wear out the wheels.

For seven years Asa made axles and fixed wagons. He amassed a few thousand dollars. And while he was doing well enough, and might live happily ever after in Brownsville, the same ambition that stirred Eli attacked him.

It was cotton, cotton, cotton. In the 1820s the whole country was talking about cotton. Why should America be dependent on London and Birmingham for cotton cloth? No reason in the world, the manufacturing men of the northeast claimed—Americans simply had to build more factories. And the American government had to protect American manufactures by putting a heavy tariff on British cotton goods.

Asa Whitney, sitting in the tavern with his pipe and glass of rum, listened to the speculative talk about cotton. He knew a good deal about cotton manufacture, for he had spent those years in New Hampshire learning how to make the machinery. Why not make machinery now and sell it in competition with his old New Hampshire employer? He knew where he could put up a factory on the river. He could build the machines to make machinery. There was no reason not to cash in on the boom.

The tariff was the key. In 1824 Andrew Jackson and John Quincy

Adams were struggling for the Presidency. Adams won in an election that is still disputed by scholars who argue over the question of Henry Clay's "throwing" his votes in exchange for power. The year 1827 started promisingly. In Washington it seemed almost certain that the tariff men were going to be able to change the law. The old law gave the British too much economic power. What was needed was more protection of manufactures, and with the power of all the senators and representatives of the northeastern states, it should be easy to make the change. So reasoning, Asa Whitney went into manufacture of cotton machinery to make his fortune.

Then came congressional action. What a blow! The high tariff passed the House, but failed in the Senate. The South did the hatchet job, a South that desperately needed those cotton sales to England to shore up an economy that was going deeper and deeper into debt.

Two years later Asa and his friends got what they wanted: the high tariff to protect them. But the tariff was not enough; in those years Asa had lost his profits and gone virtually bankrupt. He had a good reputation as a man who knew men and machinery, but the British could still bring in cotton cheaper and better than the Americans could make it, and the country was so uncertain of the future that nobody was buying cotton machinery.

All this while the transportation system of New York State was being improved remarkably. In the spring of 1826 the Erie Canal, in full operation, took in nearly three-quarters of a million dollars in tolls. Still, the Mohawk Valley was competing in various ways for that transportation profit, and the Mohawk and Hudson Railroad was determined to carry goods from the bustling port of New York City, the nation's largest center, to the west.

The organizers soon found that the hilly country around Brownsville created a great number of new problems in pushing rail lines through the mountains. The grades on the road from Albany to Schenectady were stupendous; the rise from the level of the Mohawk Valley at Schenectady to the head of the inclined plane was 115 feet. The only way to manage it, in those days, was to place a stationary engine at the head of the plane to pull the locomotive and cars. At Albany it was worse. The rise from the Hudson River to the head of the inclined plane was 185 feet—even more difficult.

The railroad men knew they needed a first-class mechanic to design and install the machinery they would need to pull those cars up the steep grades. Someone remembered Asa Whitney and the fine job he had done of building axles and carts, and how he had also shown himself adept at the design of machinery. So he was hired to undertake the demanding task.

In a few months he did it. He helped the engineers with their perilous task too, for the road's grade was sixty feet to the mile, and the engines on their way up the railroad were not going to be able to do the job. He went to work to modify and prepare the line and the machinery for the work. Very soon, the railroad men offered him permanent contracts to build cars and modify the patented locomotives to the requirements of this mountain road.

Three years went by. No one on the Mohawk and Hudson knew more about the road's operations than Asa Whitney. He surveyed a line from Schenectady to Catskill—the railroad was moving slowly but making plans for the future. He built boxcars and flatcars and passenger cars, and he began working on improvements to the railroad wheel. He saw that the wheels that were coming in to him were cumbersome and creaky, and with the experience he had working on the grades, he knew just how much of a problem friction could be and how much pulling power it could cost, particularly on a mountain road.

In the beginning he knew nothing of "stresses," rock and earth excavation, and cost estimating for trackage, nor of buying land or leasing rights of way. But he learned all these secrets of the trade, and a good deal also about canals, for the canals were the competitors of the railroads as well as their brothers in the transit business. He was well paid. The railroad men were making huge profits on investment, about 30 percent. He saw that there was indeed a future in the transportation business that could not be matched by trying to make and sell cotton manufacturing machinery in a falling market. So Asa Whitney turned his full effort to railroading.

In 1839, William H. Seward was governor of the state of New York and he was looking about for a Whig who could manage the state's canal system. It was a particularly sensitive post because the canal commissioner had great economic and political power—and he also had to be a transportation expert. It was the most demanding of jobs, for the canals, and particularly the Erie, carried a large volume of freight across the state. For example, at Lock 26, three miles west of Schenectady, in one season there were 38,000 lockages—that is, the lock was opened 38,000 times to permit passengers and freight to move between Schenectady and Utica.

Seward made it a point to get to know Asa Whitney. When he discovered that Whitney was a Whig as well as a railroad expert, he offered him the job of managing this transportation complex. So well did Whitney do in the post over one year that the governor would not hear of his leaving. But Whitney's heart really was not in canals, but in railroads. In his spare time, Asa Whitney began work on a model locomotive which he hoped to be an improvement on the existing ones

(which did not have any too much power for the jobs at hand). He set up a workshop and built boilers and pressure tanks and driving mechanisms and wheels. Wheels . . . wheels . . . wheels. He was fascinated by wheels as he had been all his life, from those early days in the Massachusetts smithy when he had greased the creaky cartwheels as his father shoed the horses for their neighbors. His Canal Commission headquarters was at Rotterdam, New York, and it was here that he experimented with his locomotive until he had it perfected. He patented a locomotive steam engine that could generate a great deal more power than those in use. Ingenuity, experience, and an eye for what was needed was the mark of this Whitney, just as it was of Eli.

The locomotive patent was granted in 1840. During his railroading, Asa Whitney had gotten to know nearly all the major suppliers of equipment to the lines. Now he was in touch with Matthias Baldwin, the locomotive builder, and they corresponded and discussed locomotive traction problems and propulsion.

Baldwin was an inventor, but one without much business sense. He had the acuity to understand his own problem, and in 1842 he was looking for someone with broad business experience to help him manage his locomotive works in Philadelphia. Who in the nation had more experience in management and railroads than Asa Whitney? For by this time all the facets of his experience had come together to make him just the man Baldwin needed to give drive and conscious direction to the course of the locomotive plant.

A deal was struck. Asa Whitney packed up his wife and five children at Rotterdam, resigned his important post, to the sadness of the New York authorities, and moved to Philadelphia.

Of course Whitney knew transportation devices from the wheels up or the stack down. He set up parts classification systems and business methods in the Baldwin plant that were still being used in the twentieth century; he was, in effect, the same kind of organizational man in the railroad business that Eli Whitney had been in armament.

With Eli, Asa shared this combination of shrewd managerial judgment and the genius of creation. As he passed through the Baldwin works day after day the little things caught his eye, and he was forever creating devices to make the job easier and the product better.

But the wheels were ever on his mind. And in his spare time he considered the problems of wheels and friction, now in the light of developments in the iron industry.

Wheels were then cast of iron and moved about a simple spindle axle. This was the major problem of friction, and one that had concerned Asa Whitney for years. After four years with Baldwin, he felt that he had gone as far as he could go. He was fifty-five years old, and

his sons were grown men who could be employed in his business if he had a firm of his own. He had earned a considerable fortune through his locomotive invention and his connection with Baldwin.

So in 1846 Asa Whitney resigned as a Baldwin partner and formed a company of his own in Philadelphia to manufacture wheels for locomotives and railroad cars.

His idea was to build a railroad car wheel with a corrugated center. This design would cut down friction and strengthen the core of the wheel, where most wear and breakdown occurred. And the corrugated center webs were to be replaceable, which would cut down on the cost of replacing whole wheels if one part broke down. Altogether it was the most important development in the railroad traction system since the locomotive itself.

Wheels . . . wheels . . . wheels. Soon the Whitneys had several patents on their improved wheels, and the invention was sweeping across the nation's rail lines. The Whitney Car Wheel Works was known from one end of the country to the other and even overseas. The plant was using seventy tons of pig iron a day to produce the new corrugated center car wheels that were revolutionizing the railroads.

The years passed. The boys took over management of the company, and Asa Whitney, aging but still spry, decided he would now go into railroad management, not as a superintendent—which he had been with the Mohawk and Hudson—but as chief executive. Just before the Civil War began he moved into Wall Street along with Jay Gould and Commodore Vanderbilt and Daniel Drew, and by shrewd maneuvering he managed to get a good foothold in the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. He was very quiet about it. He had a reason for his silence.

Soon, after the stock was safely put away and the hubbub had died down, the reason became apparent. The Philadelphia and Reading went only as far as Schuylkill Haven and did not service the developing anthracite coal mines that were opening in the area. Whitney saw immediately that with the coming of war, the demand for coal was going to be tremendous and that there would be an increase in manufactures. He also believed that anthracite was the fuel of the future. So he quietly bought up a lease on the Schuylkill Valley Railroad, which led his Reading road right into the middle of the coal fields and gave him a virtual monopoly on anthracite haulage.

Thus were the big fortunes made. However, Whitney was not able to take advantage of his opportunity for long. Railroad management was a volatile business, and only he who put his whole mind to it could expect to succeed. That is why Commodore Vanderbilt became a multimillionaire while Daniel Drew went broke—a matter of attention

to business and detail, to keep the competing lines from getting the upper hand.

In 1861 Asa Whitney fell ill. That was the end of his railroad career, just at the beginning of the boom period. With his genius, had he been able to hang on, he would have made a huge fortune with the Reading—as others did after him. He had to retire and content himself with only a handful of millions.

But by sacrificing the excitement of business life for the ease of family, Asa Whitney lived on for another thirteen years, doing charitable works and taking an interest in his sons and their businesses. He became an organizer of technical societies and a promoter of technical education. He backed publications and ground work in the engineering and mechanical fields. He gave away hundreds of thousands of dollars to charities of various kinds, and when he died, he gave $50,000 to establish a chair of dynamic engineering at the University of Pennsylvania. He was in every way an apt companion in history to his cousin Eli. His wheel changed railroading and made the "long haul," the transcontinental railroad, a very definite possibility in America.

As the stories of Eli and Asa Whitney indicate, early Whitneys seemed to have minds that ran to extremely practical accomplishments. Or perhaps it would be more fitting to say that they were men of their times, men of great spirit and undoubted genius, who worked at solving basic problems that faced the nation.

Another was Asa's cousin—also Asa Whitney—son of Shubael, who was six generations removed from old John Whitney, who had come across the water a century and a half before.

The Shubael Whitney farm was located at Lantern Hill, near North Groton, Connecticut, and this Asa, who was born in 1797, was the eldest of nine children. He was also brightest and was to go furthest.

Asa had no particular education beyond the common school of the day, which prepared him as similar schools prepared his cousins for the life of farmer or mechanic—all it was supposed to do. He stayed on the farm until he was well into his teens and then went to New York City, with his few clothes and even fewer dollars. He landed in the city, down below Broadway, on the row where the department stores congregated like sheep at a crossing. It would be another five years before Broadway would beckon the storefronts. Meanwhile, fledgling clerks lodged in rooms around West Street and over toward the river, and sought their employment in the center of the growing town.

The firm of F. Sheldon was one of the more prominent and

successful in New York City's dry goods trade. Young Whitney sought a job there, caught on, and progressed rapidly up the ladder of department store success. In a few years the firm was more important, as New York grew dramatically to become the nation's leading port and biggest city. Whitney grew with Sheldon, and was sent abroad to buy the yard goods, laces, gold lace and buttons, the shirtings and other materials, woolens from British mills—all the hundreds of items of manufacture and art that went into a department store of the day. He proved himself an adept bargainer and an honest tradesman. He had a shrewd eye for quality and he established himself early as a good man for the firm. By the middle of the 1830s, as he was approaching middle age, the company changed hands—the original Sheldon took in a member of his family. This action was the trigger for Asa Whitney, for, whether the old firm was dissolved and reorganized or he became dissatisfied, he went into business for himself in New York City.

Already the "swells" were beginning to move uptown and find excuses to build summer places in the country. Whitney was a successful merchant, and he soon qualified as a swell. In his travels abroad he had become a master of languages, and he dressed nattily. Unlike many of his cousins he was short and of sturdy build. He looked a good deal like Napoleon Bonaparte, a matter that excited much curiosity when he visited France, which he did often on buying trips. Indeed, on one such he had married Herminie Antoinette Pillet, and he brought her back to New York. But her health could not stand the climate and she died in 1833. Two years later Asa Whitney married Sarah Jay Munro, the daughter of the wealthy New York banker and statesman Peter Jay Munro and the grandniece of the statesman John Jay.

Whitney owned several pieces of property on Broadway in these days. That was the place to be—it was where Alexander Turney Stewart was building a remarkable department store that would outpace all others. But Asa Whitney was doing well, too.

Within a few years—even before he left Sheldon—he brought much of his family down from the rocky hilltop farm of Massachusetts and established them in a big house in New Rochelle. He also sent his younger brothers and sisters off to school to enjoy the education he had missed. And he built a big summer place at New Rochelle for Sarah.

Instead, he should have been putting money in the bank.

He learned that the hard way, first from others. In 1835 a good share of mercantile New York burned in a huge fire. Land values tumbled, for they had been based on the importance of the district, and Broadway was particularly hard hit. The land speculators guessed that as the city rebuilt it would move away from the rivers, with their rats and pestilence, and that this section of New York would become

business-oriented and no longer residential, which meant it would not be good for department stores.

But Asa Whitney disagreed. He said Broadway land would increase in value over the next few years, and he bought a new piece of it, so much and so expensively that he put himself in the hands of bankers.

Just then Wall Street collapsed in the panic of 1837 and a long decade of hard times began.

Whitney had chosen as banker one of his wife's relatives, Peter Augustus Jay, on the assumption that if there were troubles he would be protected. After all, Sarah was a rich woman in her own right, and she held a large share of her mother's estate, some of which she had never collected.

By 1838 hard times were definitely the actuality and the prospect for the coming year. Whitney's department store business had been excellent, soon it was only good, and then it was less than good. In the fall of 1840, Sarah Whitney died suddenly and when her affairs were examined it was discovered that she had left no will. She had no children, and the laws of New York were clear: her husband did not share in her estate; her share of all the wealth she had brought to the marriage reverted to her mother's residual estate and was redistributed among the already wealthy brothers and sisters.

Nor could Whitney hope for mercy from his wife's cousin, who held the mortgage on his land. Times grew worse, he was pressed for cash for his business, and he sold off the New Rochelle properties at a fraction of their value. That sale tided him over for a bit, but then Jay began pressing for the payments on the mortgage on the Broadway property. Whitney could not pay. Jay foreclosed. Then the whole business structure collapsed and the Whitney firm went down into dust.

At the age of forty-five, twice married and now widowed and alone, Whitney fell back on his old skill: He would go abroad and work as agent for several department stores in New York. He was accepted gladly.

He intended also to trade on his own account with what little he had salvaged from the wreckage of his fortune. This time, instead of traveling to Europe, he would go to China. He had a hunch that China held the future for imports. The sweet and pungent smells were already in the air: the British were preempting the China trade in lacquers and teas and ginseng and rare spices. Such Americans as Whitney were itching to get these beautiful and useful products that had been available earlier only to the occasional voyager.

The making and losing of a fortune had left Asa Whitney with no

great regard for money. He wrote in his diary on the outward journey to China that he really did not care if he made more. What would he do with it? He had educated his relatives, he was childless and alone. If he did make a new fortune, he said, he would use it to further some grand design in favor of mankind in general and his countrymen in particular.

And already that grand design was in his mind. For even as China loomed ahead, he looked upon the whole Pacific area with the eyes of a merchant: there were now materials and manufactures to be brought for the delectation and advancement of the people of New York and the other population centers on the eastern seaboard. For the first time America was turning westward. It would take government a few years to follow the leaders and the public, but the result would be the expedition of Commodore Matthew Perry to the Pacific to open trade with Japan and China.

Like many a Whitney, Asa was a good step ahead of his countrymen: He was envisaging the Pacific Railroad, the grand transcontinental line that would connect New York with the West and would bring those foreign manufactures cheaply and quickly east, without the tortuous voyage around Cape Horn.

By October 1842 Whitney's ship reached Singapore, and there he found all the talk was about the war just concluded. For several years the imperial government of the Manchu Dynasty had been resisting the gradual encroachments of Britain and other countries in the Canton area. Finally the mutual displeasure had erupted in British seizure of the Canton River forts which had been firing on British ships. British naval Captain Charles Elliot worked out a treaty with the local governor, but it was repudiated by both China and Britain and war started once again, this time not to stop until Sir Henry Pottinger seized a number of places along the coast and the Chinese ceded Hong Kong to the British and signed the Treaty of Nanking.

In the fall of 1842 Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai were to become official ports of trade, and the Chinese government assured merchants of Britain and other countries that they would not be molested, as had sometimes been the case in the past.

Soon Whitney was in Hong Kong and then in China proper. He remained there for the next two years, traveling from one port to another, buying on behalf of himself and his backers. In these two years, Asa Whitney acquired more than a veneer of education about Asia. And he made a new fortune—a huge fortune that meant he would never again have to engage in business or trade to support himself. The China trade was extremely lucrative in the forties.

Knowing this, the United States government sent Caleb Cushing to China to negotiate a treaty that would protect Americans from the

strange and sometimes harsh practices of the Chinese legal system. At that time, for example, it was illegal for a foreigner to study the Chinese language—the Imperial rule held it was a violation of all sacred rites to let the barbarians learn the ways of Heaven. This had to be changed, if any meaningful contact was to be made between nations; the Americans and others must be able to read what the Chinese were really doing. In years past the government had maintained elaborate façades behind which secret activities multiplied and western power could not stand such truculence.

So, aided by Whitney and other traders, Cushing negotiated the Treaty of Wang Hsia in the summer of 1844.

Shortly afterward, counting his fortune and blessing his luck, Asa Whitney left Hong Kong and headed home. He would, as he said, devote the rest of his life to his grand design—the Pacific Railroad.

Whitney then settled at Locust Hill, on Rock Creek, not far from the edge of the District of Columbia, about an hour's ride from the Capitol. He wanted to be within easy reach of the legislators whose support would be crucial to the success of his project.

On January 28, 1845, Whitney asked Congress to set aside a strip of land sixty miles wide to run from the western shore of Michigan through the south pass of the Rocky Mountains and onto the western slope. There the line would diverge: one branch heading north to the Columbia River, and the other heading southwest toward San Francisco Bay. Within the sixty-mile radius, a railroad right of way would be protected, but all the rest of the land was to be sold to support the building of the railroad. Whitney would build the railroad with his money, and he was to have no profit until the line had been complete and was in operation for twenty years. Then he was to have the surplus moneys from the sale of lands, or the lands left over within the sixty-mile zone.

Since Asa Whitney was forty-eight years old at the time that he advocated this plan, obviously it could not be called a "get-rich-quick" scheme. In all probability he would be dead before his corporation collected a dollar. Whitney's was, in reality, an eleemosynary gesture, and Whitney was willing to put up a large share of his fortune to see the road built, but knew that the undertaking was so vast that no man or private combination of men could afford to manage it alone. It must be a government undertaking.

All Whitney asked for was a salary of $4,000 a year for his services as supervisor of construction of the road.

The trouble was that Asa Whitney did not ask for enough.

Times were such that a transcontinental railroad was appealing,

but there were difficulties among the states. For as always, North and South took long, hard looks at this scheme to determine what it would do to their sectional interests. Would it bring in more free states than slave states as the construction progressed and settlement grew heavy along the route? How were these new territories going to line up? That was the most important single question in the minds of many.

But there was another, more cynical, question.

Who was this Asa Whitney and what was his "angle?" Everybody had an angle; the gentlemen of Congress could not understand Whitney's. The idea that he did not seek personal wealth from the scheme was so ridiculous as to be scoffable. Everybody wanted to use the public lands to get rich. Remember Yazoo—that multimillion-dollar raid on the public treasury of Georgia in which speculators had made off with 35 million acres of the Yazoo River country? Yazoo was child's play as compared to the sixty-mile strip that went clear across the country from Michigan. How many millions of acres? Few could even count them.

That was the kind of talk that began in the halls of Congress as men gathered in little knots in the committee rooms and traced the scheme out on maps of the West.

Why so far north? Why not farther south, where the winter working conditions were better and the Rockies trailed off so that a road could much more easily be built through them? Why right through the heart of the high mountain country and the big plateau?

When he heard this argument, Asa Whitney headed to the Capitol to assure the gentlemen that he knew what he was about. On the long voyage home from China he had put his mind to the problem and had determined on this dual route as the best means of establishing population and growth in an orderly manner through uninhabited country. The lands along the twin routes were fertile, for the most part, and would yield the highest income from sale, so that the line could be financed and the general revenues of the United States would not be tapped at all. The twin lines running to the coast would cause the establishment of cities—one or more on San Francisco Bay, where sleepy San Francisco lay, and one or more on the Columbia, where John Jacob Astor's trading post had been laid out. Thus the most advantageous terms could be secured for trade with China.

Any congressman could see what the China trade would mean if he took the trouble to visit Asa Whitney at home. For Locust Hill was a showplace of Oriental art and craftsmanship: inlaid tables and beautiful porcelains and pottery crowded together with dragon furniture and jade pieces, ornate screens and silverwork and gold. Those who did go to Whitney's saw and needed little convincing that there was much of

advantage to the nation in every way in promoting the railroad and the China trade.

But the suspicions of Whitney's motives were not allayed. He was just too good to be true. Honest people and honest legislators were suspicious of big money schemes these days; there had been too many raids on the treasury. It was true that such a line to Oregon would further the struggle with Britain for that territory. Some five thousand Americans lived in the region below the Columbia, and their rights were contested by the British. The argument had become serious—it stood between the two nations, and was about to be a political issue in Presidential and congressional politics. But the main issue was the cost and financing.

What was Whitney going to get out of it all?

Since Whitney did not want anything more than he had stipulated, it would seem that he could answer the question satisfactorily. But no, that is not the way of government and legislators; if he did not satisfy their suspicions that he had as much cupidity as the next man, then he must be an even greater scoundrel than they suspected. That is the way the arguments were shaping, when Congress adjourned for the long summer recess in March of 1845.

Whitney saw how things were going. He also had learned in three months that the sectional pressures on Congress were so great that he would have to undertake a campaign to show the public the national need for the proposed railroad line. The public, not the Congress, was going to be the testing ground for the idea.

Whitney opened his campaign that spring with a long letter of public policy to the *National Intelligencer*, a political journal in Washington that was one of the most respected papers of the day. As was the practice, the letter about the railroad was picked up by newspapers all across the country, and in a few weeks the Whitney plan was the subject of talk in every political meeting and most saloons in the land.

Specifically, Whitney announced that he was organizing an expedition west to see the lands in question. He invited any interested citizens to accompany him.

There were not so many citizens, even in 1845, who could drop their affairs for six months and hike off on an exploratory mission to see the wild lands of the West, nor were there so many that brave. But eight men did agree to go with him on the trip.

Whitney went to New York and began to outfit his expedition. All those years in merchandising had made him a master publicist. He knew that the way to create and sustain interest in his project was to build what the newspapers called "a running story."

He made news with his outfitting, and his departure from New York by rail. The party went to the raw, yowling city of Chicago on the prairie, and up the shore of Lake Michigan to a point near Milwaukee, where it turned west, away from civilization. It crossed the prairies to the Great Bend of the Missouri River, and came down that river to St. Louis. All the while, Whitney's pen was busy, and dispatches went to the newspapers, to be copied as the great adventure of that summer. It was good tonic for the country. Unfortunately, the whole enterprise could not have come at a less opportune time to gain the full attention of the nation. In March, just after Congress had annexed Texas, the Mexican government broke off relations with the United States. In the South, General Zachary Taylor was poising himself to attack. And that summer, as the tourists reported on their grand adventure, most American attention was focussed on the army's maneuvers in Texas, whence Taylor had now gone.

Whitney and his explorers could not, of course, make the whole trip west and cover the two forks of the line. In 1845, such an undertaking would have occupied a year, perhaps two. All Whitney was trying to do was stir up interest and prove that the beginning stages, through the Middle West, went through country so valuable that the scheme could surely work.

The newspapers did well by him. His letters sometimes filled a full column of type on the front pages or the news pages of the papers—which was as much as the situation in Mexico got from day to day.

Think of what the railroad would mean to America, said Whitney: The distance from England to China was 17,000 miles by water. But if the railroad were complete, the distance from London to Canton would be only 11,500 miles, and America would benefit by all the trade that was now passing in British ships around Cape Horn.

He had a score of reasons:

If the road were built, America, not Britain, would control the China trade. That would push America up among the big powers of the world and make the nation gloriously prosperous.

If the road were built, American naval power would be established in the Pacific. No longer would American seamen have to plead with foreign potentates for the rights of trade and fishing. No longer would squadrons have to be sent out from time to time to assert the American importance. A small Pacific naval force would control the whole vast western ocean.

If the road were built, the country would grow up at least twice as fast as it was now growing. Any man dissatisfied with his lot in the East

need only turn west to live a happy and fulfilled existence and earn a handsome living.

If the road were built, the territory along the Pacific Ocean would no longer be in dispute with Britain. Oregon territory up to the Straits of Juan de Fuca would automatically become a part of the United States. If the road was not built, this whole area might be snapped up by a voracious Britain, or, equally wrong, would become an independent nation.

As he traveled with the newspapermen Whitney gladly expounded on the details of his railroad. It would be 2,160 miles long, more or less—the northern route would be slightly longer than the southern.

And he would buy up those lands—since Congress was so loath to act. He would pay ten cents an acre for the land thirty miles on each side of the rail line. When ten miles of line were built, he was to get his title to the first strip of sixty miles by five miles, and then he could sell the lands to finance the construction of the next five miles.

Thus he would go leap-frogging with sales and construction, until the railroad was built clear across the country.

He would protect the national interest. Half the lands would be held in reserve to pay for the building of the line across the desert sections.

And what, asked the reporters, was Mr. Whitney risking in all this?

Well, said Asa Whitney, he calculated that the road would cost $50,000,000 to build by 1845 prices, and that $15,000,000 more had to be invested before the line would begin to pay. Personally he would have to put up $1,000,000 just to get started, before the money began to flow in from the land purchases. That was what he was really risking and he was willing to do it, even though he would be an old man before he would see anything from the investment—or, for that matter, it might all go to his heirs.

The newspapermen wrote it all down, and the stories appeared in the press, starting new arguments in salon and saloon.

Wherever Whitney went he managed to find an audience. He was particularly successful in securing time before various state legislative bodies. He spoke to the legislatures from New Hampshire to Indiana, outlining his plans and pleading for action before it was too late.

But events and wrong-headed ideas were lining up against him.

Americans were woefully misinformed about their own continent, and many of them had little confidence that the whole nation-land would ever really extend from one ocean to another as Jefferson and

other seers had predicted. It was impossible to build a road 3,000 miles across the country, over mountains where the passes were 7,500 feet high. A gigantic scheme, but totally impracticable. So said many a newspaper seer. "Such a road," wrote one, "especially one from Lake Michigan, could be used but a part of each year. How hard it was to clear away snow from the tracks of railroads near Washington was well known to everybody. To keep open a road across plains as high as the highest peak of the Alleghanies crossed by Cumberland Road would be all but impossible."

That was one kind of negative argument. It did not disturb Asa Whitney as much as another, which came from the politicians.

Some of them got out their calculating pencils, and came up with the fact that Asa Whitney wanted 92,160,000 acres of U.S. public lands.

At ten cents an acre.

What a steal!

Whitney retorted. He would carry the public mails for twenty years for nothing; he would transport troops and public employees free.

And well he ought to, said the critics.

What a steal!

And then a new face appeared on the scene: competition. Hartwell Carver, a St. Louis promoter, had observed in the newspapers the success of the Whitney publicity campaign on the trip that summer of 1845. He came forward boldly in 1846 to claim that he had been pushing the same idea for ten years. Carver said he would build both a railroad and a *telegraph line* from Lake Michigan to South Pass, with branches to California and Oregon. All he wanted was an exclusive and *perpetual* charter, a right of way, with quarry, mining, and timber privileges, and 8 million acres of public land to extend out thirty miles from the tracks, and he would give the government $1.25 an acre instead of the dime that Whitney offered. Of course, the $1.25 per acre would be in stock of the railroad and telegraph company, which could be redeemed by the company later.

So there was going to be a fight.

Unfortunately it became a sectional and political struggle as well as a business matter.

Early in the autumn, having read all the publicity put forth by Whitney, a Louisiana newspaper editor named Robert Patterson began sounding the drums in his Concordia *Intelligencer* for a Pacific railroad that ran through the South. That would make certain the political stability of the cotton states: Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, New Mex-

ico, Arizona, California—all those regions would become safe and guaranteed for slavery.

The Patterson idea caught fire in the South far more than the Whitney plan did in the North. In Memphis in November a convention of 583 delegates, representing sixteen southern states, one western state and one territory, considered the prospects. So important was the matter in the South that chairman of the meeting was no less a figure than John C. Calhoun, the senator from South Carolina, who was leader of the Cotton Bloc. Whitney tried desperately to get to the meeting to offer his alternative plan and to stipulate that it was in no way political or sectional, but he missed connections at St. Louis and never did get there.

Whitney became involved in a quarrel with Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. Having read of the Whitney adventures that fall, Douglas offered a number of objections, and his replies to Whitney were widely published in the press as well.

Whitney's detractors began to pillory him. After he had appeared at a public meeting in Cincinnati, the editor of the *Daily Commercial* compared him to the celebrated Baron Munchausen, the world's greatest liar, and had this to say:

"*No capital was required.* No stock was to be issued. No dividends to be made.

"The fruit of nature, it would create settlements, commerce, and wealth, and stimulate production. . . ."

Hah! said the opposition, which was growing steadily in the South and border states. *Hah*! What was Asa Whitney really going to get out of it?

And that underlying, nagging question could not be resolved by Asa Whitney no matter what he did. Americans simply did not trust anyone who said he was doing something for nothing.

It almost came about. In 1846, President Polk was trying to settle the vexatious question of Texas without a war with Mexico, and he was not having much success. It was all mixed up together—Texas, Oregon, and slavery—and the railroad scheme was right in the middle. The Mexican government informed Special Commissioner John Slidell of the U. S. that Mexico was not going to make any deals about Texas. The Americans were going to be at war quickly enough with Britain over the Oregon country, and they would have no time to fight another war down south.

The British were up in arms about the railroad scheme, because, as one New Brunswick newspaper put it, "If the United States be the

first to effect a railroad communication from the Atlantic to the Pacific, but a short time would be necessary to enable them to inundate the Oregon with emigrants, and thus to wholly annihilate British influence there. . . ."

Suddenly it seemed that everybody had an interest in the railroad. Senator Douglas wanted it to start from Chicago. (There, he and Whitney were in agreement.) Senator Thomas Hart Benton, of Missouri, wanted it to start at St. Louis. The senators from Tennessee wanted it to start at Memphis.

By mid-spring the war with Mexico was a reality, the quarrel with Britain was on its way to settlement—and the railroad had to move back in the system of priorities.

If Asa Whitney was dismayed, he gave no signs of it. Stumping the country continually and impressing ladies and men alike with his Napoleonic gestures and appearance, Asa Whitney worked for his grand design. Because of the war, Congress was in session late, and at the end of July the Committee on Public Lands of the Senate reported favorably on a bill that would establish Whitney's railroad, except that the land was going to cost him 16 cents an acre instead of a dime. But Stephen Douglas was opposed to this method of finance, and when the bill came before the Senate he fought it. He could not kill it there, but his influence with the House helped, and the bill died in the House of Representatives that year.

Whitney's idea now spawned a whole bundle of transportation plans. Some succeeded, such as the Panama railroad of William H. Aspinwall, and some failed, such as the Tehuantepec line, to split the difference between Panama and the wide California run, proposed by a Mr. Hargous of New York.

Whitney never stopped promoting.

He began a tour of the western states again in the fall of 1846 with a speech at Pittsburgh on October 20. Then he went farther west to counteract the influence of Senator Douglas, and he found support in Ohio and Indiana. In December, when Congress reconvened, Whitney was back at Locust Hill, and ready to begin buttonholing legislators up on Capitol Hill.

Two days before Christmas he was in Philadelphia speaking, and on January 4 he was in New York doing the same. That *was* an occasion. It was a cold and blustery day in the big city, but thousands assembled at the Broadway Tabernacle to hear the illustrious Asa Whitney discourse upon the Pacific Railroad. It was said that some of the women came because it was certain that Mr. Whitney had a perfect resemblance to Napoleon Bonaparte. But he did not care; they came,

and where he had listeners he was confident he would soon have believers.

However, a populist organization called the National Reform Movement had been hearing with increasing dismay the public pronouncements of Mr. Whitney relative to the railroad. The National Reformers, who were very strong in New York, wanted a road that was built by the government and controlled by Congress. They packed the Whitney meeting at the Tabernacle that night.

Asa Whitney was introduced and stood up under the glare of the lights. He spoke long and fervently of his railroad scheme. His speech was as usual. He explained the tremendous opportunity for Americans and showed his route to be superior to all others, ticking off the objections about towns of origin. He still insisted that the line must start from Lake Michigan, and he pointed to the confluence there of traffic by rail to the East and traffic by water to the whole lakes region. When he finished, the call for questions was interrupted by a demand from the audience.

"We want Ryckman," came the shout. "Let Ryckman speak."

Mr. Ryckman, a leader of National Reform, had prepared himself for a fight. He got up and started denouncing Asa Whitney as a no-good capitalist who possessed a deep and secretive scheme to mulct the American workingman of his hard-earned money.

Whitney supporters booed and shouted and set upon Ryckman supporters, who fought back. Then the Whitney people charged, and the police shut off the gas line so the lights would go out, and kept the line shut so nobody could light them again. The Ryckman backers were undaunted and produced candles they had brought for just such an emergency. Ryckman continued to fulminate from the podium until finally someone looked around in the dim light and discovered that the National Reformers were talking only to themselves. Everyone else had left the hall.

The reporters for the morning papers had a field day with the story. Out of it all came a feeling of sympathy for Asa Whitney, who had been so badly treated in this "put-up job." The New York *Herald* gave a blow-by-blow account of the proceedings and made Ryckman and his friends out to be cowardly jackasses. The New York *Tribune* was not quite so rough, nor was the *Times*, but in none of the papers did Ryckman come off a hero for his vituperations against Asa Whitney, who was seen as the gentleman, offering something to the country, only to be abused.

Made a laughingstock, National Reformer Ryckman finally published a column-long explanation of his charges in the least unfriendly

of the journals, the New York *Tribune*. He admitted that he had never read the Whitney plan and that he had attacked it as land grab without knowing anything about it.

And now that he had read it, said Mr. Ryckman, he was completely convinced and he wanted to apologize for all the fisticuffs and brickbats.

So Whitney won a convert and had a marvelous press in New York at the same time. His acceptance was almost automatic. He had something to say and he was a good speaker. He was a gentleman, and a well-to-do one. Soon he was invited to Albany to address the legislature, and he convinced many there that the railroad was a good idea. In 1847 ten different state legislatures memorialized Congress in favor of the Whitney plan, and always as Congress met there was a bill or two in the hoppers, to put the plan into motion.

But the years went by and nothing happened.

Thomas Hart Benton opposed it in 1848, in caustic speeches on the floor—the old charge that Whitney was a profiteer again. Whitney answered him hotly, and the newspapers had another controversy to cover.

In 1849 Whitney continued. The New York *Herald* opposed his idea but gave him credit that year for his unwavering belligerence in promotion of the plan, and came out for a Pacific railroad of some kind, some time.

That was progress, but not such that Whitney was sure he should continue. He began to talk, around Locust Hill, about stopping the drive and spending his time cultivating his gardens and tending to his livestock. He owned a dairy in the district, and had a number of other low-key, gentleman's enterprises. Why should he continue to take so much abuse from politicians?

Friends persuaded him. They sent a public letter asking that he continue his efforts. He agreed to do so and went back to the slippery halls of Congress to lobby once more. That year—1849—he published the pamphlet *A Project for a Railroad to the Pacific*, which contained all his arguments of the past, as modified and buttressed over the years.

That fall, at least he had helped to stir up enough attention to the issue that two great conventions were called, one at St. Louis and the other at Memphis. Senator Douglas was the principle mover of the St. Louis convention. Chairman of the Memphis convention was Matthew Fontaine Maury, the geographer and oceanographer, who was Superintendent of Charts and Instruments for the government, and one of the leading scientific figures of the period. The Memphis convention came out for a Southern Pacific railroad.

The real importance of both these meetings was to show how little chance the national railroad had at the moment—sectional and local interests prevailed. In such times, with the attention of the whole nation focused on slavery and state's rights, it would take almost superhuman effort to put the transcontinental railroad across. The reason was not that the nation opposed the idea—nearly everyone was now in favor of the railroad—but the manner, the location, divided everyone.

Asa Whitney knew this and in 1850 he was ready to quit, not from pique, but because time was running out. He had been overtaken by an event—the westward movement of the population even as he pleaded for the railroad. When Congress convened in December 1850, Whitney was at Locust Hill. He came to the Capitol, this time to tell the senators and representatives that if they wanted their Pacific road built in the manner he recommended, they would have to act immediately or not at all. Much of the land he had originally counted on was already settled.

Congress listened and did nothing. True, gold had been discovered in California, but that only served to highlight the basic issue. Senator Henry Clay had addressed himself to that issue in the Compromise of 1850, and had compromised everything and solved nothing. Asa Whitney left Congress deeply discouraged; he had failed, he had been overwhelmed by sectionalism, stupidity, and selfishness.

He still had one hope: Canada. All the talk in the United States had raised considerable interest in Canada in a scheme similar to the one Whitney proposed. The problem, however, was the meagerness of the population. It was hardly conceivable, given Canada's slight scattering of people, that the road could be financed on the pattern he had advocated. But perhaps Britons in sufficient strength could be persuaded to emigrate and to buy the lands to support the construction.

Slight as the hope seemed, Asa Whitney had too much emotional capital invested not to investigate. He sailed to England on the steamer *Asia*. Soon the New York *Herald*, which had turned against him and now called him a publicity hound, reported that he was meeting with some success in London.

But not enough. Whitney stayed in London and then visited other cities in England. He arrived in Britain in April 1851, but by June he was ready to leave. On August 18 he sailed to New York on the packet *Isaac Webb*. He was no longer in any hurry. He had quit.

Whitney retired to Locust Hill to follow the pursuits of the country gentleman. He entertained. He cultivated his gardens and tended his livestock as he had threatened to do. He married Catherine

Campbell, the daughter of Maurice Moore of North Carolina, and he became the complete southern gentleman. He no longer rode from his house to the Capitol. He quietly disappeared from public view.

The years went by. Senator Douglas stood up time and again to fight for a Pacific railroad, but even he could not heal the sectional breach that thwarted its serious consideration.

Every morning Asa Whitney went for a ride around his estates. He came home for lunch and then rested and read and worked about the plantation. At four o'clock the household assembled for tea, and later in the evening they dined, and stayed up late if there were guests. On Sunday they all went to church, the carriage waited outside the door of the house in the big circular drive promptly at 10:30 in the morning.

Whitney knew everyone worth knowing in the various administrations but he stayed away from Congress, and many on the Hill who had seen so much of him thought he must be dead. No such thing, he was by all reports a vivacious, charming, happy old gentleman living on his riches and enjoying himself, having given up entirely the worry about the railroad. When war came he remained in Washington; all his own family were Yankees, all his wife's family were Rebels. But life went on at Locust Hill as before. And after the war he befriended General Grant; when Grant became President Asa Whitney frequented the White House.

Whitney now watched as others built the railroad he had offered to put across the country, but under far different conditions, with conflict and scandal resounding from the hammers that drove the spikes. Everything that he had said about the railroad came true—its advantages, its extreme cost because of the delay—but never once did he yield to the temptation to say I-told-you-so to Congress. Why should he?—virtually none of his old friends and enemies were left by then. Time had passed them all by.

One day in the summer of 1872 he came home from his ride feeling ill, and took to his bed. He had contracted the typhoid fever that was epidemic in the Washington area that summer. He lingered for several weeks, but on September 17, 1872, he died and was buried quietly by the family in Rock Creek Cemetery. It was properly ironic that the funeral should be unnoted and unknown to the general public, and it was just the way he wanted it. For perhaps the greatest publicist of his age had finally retired.

He was fortunate in a way. He had lived long enough to see the accomplishment of the dream he had envisaged years before any other in America had seriously considered a railroad to unite East and West and create the conditions that would force growth upon America.

There they were, the men who dreamed of railroads—two Whit-

neys named Asa. Were they "footnotes to history"? One of them had perfected the railroad wheel that made possible the dream of the other, and the second had drummed at the American consciousness for years about the transcontinental road, so that by the time the Civil War ended every argument against it had been exhausted and the road was built swiftly. In the textbook sense these Whitneys must be footnotes, for there is no conceivable way that the immense contributions of all Americans can be told thus. But for all that, they were important figures in their society and contributors to the life that Americans would lead for a century and more.

II
Scientist and Artist

In the 1820s the hard times of America began to ease, and in the next few decades certain families found wealth and leisure and began to cultivate the study of natural history and the arts. Most of the descendants of John Whitney of England were still farmers, or part-time farmers, but as the cities grew and lands in the eastern states became more populous and more valuable, there were notable changes in the way in which Whitneys and others viewed the world and earned their livings. Two Whitneys of this new generation stand out, for one was to make his way through unknown areas in the infant study of natural science, and the second was to become one of the greatest American musical artists of all time.

3/ The Man Who Discovered America

Whitneys came in all political persuasions in every period, beginning with the colonial days. At least one Whitney lost a fortune because he chose the wrong side in the Revolutionary War. That man was the Rev. Aaron Whitney of Petersham, Massachusetts, who had so aroused his colonial acquaintances with his pro-British ways in the years and months just before the Revolution that he did not prosper thereafter.

Since the problem was the same in many a family (even Ethan Allen had a Tory brother), the sins of the fathers were not much visited on the sons. Abel Whitney, the Rev. Aaron's son, had entirely different attitudes, probably fostered at Harvard which he attended in the early 1770s, graduating three years before the Declaration of Independence. After college this young Whitney began reading law, but the war took him out of that and at the end of it he was a major in the militia.

Abel began life with all the advantages: Harvard, the law, the right side in the war, and marriage to Clarissa Dwight, heiress and belle, who was the daughter of the wealthy Colonel Josiah Dwight of Springfield. But Abel was almost as unlucky as his father; a few years after the Revolution he found himself ordered to take a major role in the suppression of Shays' Rebellion. He was not popular in the community thereafter, for the federal government's treatment of the farmers was a national disgrace. In one way and another, in the turbulent times that followed, Abel lost almost all his property, and then died at the age of fifty-one, leaving his twenty-year-old son, Josiah Dwight Whitney, to support his mother and six siblings.

Luckily the Dwights were rich. Young Josiah soon had a job with his maternal uncles, who were merchants in the Boston area. They sent him to England to be their purchasing agent. He was shrewd enough and got on well enough to be successful. He was ordered home in 1815. While he was waiting for his ship in June 1815, the word came of Wellington's victory at the Battle of Waterloo. The British papers were

full of it. So, passengers gossiping about the news and its import, they sailed, to arrive in Boston Harbor weeks later. Whitney repaired to the rooms of his uncles and told them of the events. They hustled him off to the offices of the *Advertiser*—and that is how Boston got the stunning news of Wellington's victory over Napoleon.

With the money he had earned as agent for his uncles, Josiah Whitney moved to Northampton, then known as "the Athens of western Massachusetts," and set up a private banking house. In 1833 he founded the Northampton Bank, which later became the Northampton National Bank, and for the next thirty years he was cashier and president.

Frugality and common sense made this Whitney rich. He soon became a leading citizen of Northampton and built the finest mansion in town, on Main Street, on the site of the old Jonathan Edwards house, one of the historic spots in the town. In 1818, when he was thirty-two, he married Sarah Williston, a preceptress at Hopkins Academy for young ladies at Hadley. They had eight children in the next fifteen years before she died. A year after her death he married again, Clarissa James this time. She had another five children. So the Whitney's was quite a large household.

This family, growing up in its own "Athens," was to produce a number of figures in the fields of culture and letters. William, born in 1827, was the first American to become famous in the field of Indo-European philology. He went to Yale, studied Sanskrit, and then astounded the world with his discoveries and writings in learned journals. William's was a small and rather peculiar world, to be sure, but an important one in scholarship, and he was known from St. Petersburg to Rangoon, a respected member of half a dozen societies and an important contributor to the *Century Dictionary.*

One of the girls of the family became a teacher at Smith College, that advanced institution for women. Another brother, James, joined the Boston Public Library and supervised catalogue preparations there for many years. And still another brother, Henry, became a major editor of the *Century Dictionary.*

They were indeed a cultured and able family—this branch of the Whitney tribe—and the most important of them in American letters was Josiah, Jr., the eldest, born in 1819. He first went to school at a parsonage a few miles from home when he was only eight years old. The minister, Parson Moses Hallock, was then an old man and his daughter Martha was running the school. Young Whitney showed her a strong mind—and a strong stomach, for the major fare at the school was potatoes and milk, so restricted a diet that one of the four boys ran away and went home, only to be dragged back by his father. Josiah stayed for the summer, and went home with a letter.

This certifies that Master Josiah D. Whitney has, while my pupil, conducted himself with much propriety and beauty.

Three months have passed fleetly and delightfully along, enlivened by his vivacity, and cheered by his intellectual improvement and grateful affection.

Ever attentive to instruction, O! may he listen to the precepts of "Eternal Wisdom" and so bloom above the skies!

His affectionate instructor

Martha Hallock

Quite a testimonial to the young man, particularly since that fall he announced that his ambition was to become a bootblack.

But he did not achieve it, not with his banker father in charge. Josiah Whitney was sent on to Southampton Academy, and then to the famous Round Hill School at Northampton. Or maybe the word is infamous. At least old Josiah soon thought so. Round Hill was founded by Joseph Green Cogswell and George Bancroft. It was to be the model school of the nineteenth century, patterned after the finest *gymnasia* of Europe, which were the best schools in the western world. Round Hill's students came mostly from Boston and New York, but there were some from the south and west, and even from Mexico and Brazil, the West Indies, and Europe. The school existed for only ten years, but so large a percentage of its pupils became important personages in later life that it was famous long after it was gone.

Josiah, Sr., did not like the school, and after two years he took young Josiah out and sent him to New Haven to go to school under Stiles French, a former master at Round Hill.

"My Dear Sir," old Josiah wrote the new headmaster, and he ticked off the reasons he was sending Josiah to the French school, even though he could not afford it for his other children. It was to remove that dreadful "cosmopolitanism" of Round Hill, which little Jo had acquired by consorting with Mexicans and Brazilians and Frenchmen and Russians. He had picked up ". . . perhaps many wrong notions and feelings from associating with the boys on Round Hill. . . ." Stiles French was invited to remove these—with a cane if necessary.

Josiah's mother had wanted him to become a minister, and now that she was dead her ghost hung heavy over his future. Personally, if he could not be a bootblack, he wanted to become a merchant, probably to travel to Europe and Brazil and Mexico.

But youth forgets, and Josiah forgot quickly. In a few months his father was writing him ". . . how gratified I was by your visit . . . and chiefly because I saw an improvement in your character. . . ."

What a life! The father kept pressing the twelve-year-old boy about his profession. Anyone who says the pressures of the twentieth century are harsh on twenty-year-old college students who have found difficulty in "finding their vocation" ought to read the correspondence of old Josiah to young Josiah away at school.

Eventually he was bullied into becoming an intellectual. When he had given up all hope of bootblackery, he was sent to Phillips Andover Academy in Massachusetts, a school already famous in the 1830s for its educating of preachers, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals. There he would have liked to have majored in girls, but it was twenty miles to Boston (when he went there *he walked*) and the girls at the local female seminary in Andover were not winsome. "All the boys in my class are fine fellows," he told his sister. But still he was losing the battle of good fellowship.

"With Harvard in the hands of the Unitarians," wrote this Whitney's biographer, "Yale was somewhat inevitable for either a Dwight or a Whitney." So young Jo went to Yale, in 1836. There was not much change since Eli's day. The boys got up at 5:30 and went to chapel and breakfast and then began their studies. They hurried all day long, pell-mell, until 5:30 in the evening when they gathered for evening prayers. Josiah belonged to three societies and had to give two declamations in chapel every term, ". . . one of the great bores in college. . . ."

He had a sense of humor, which helped him through the endless round of lectures and long papers and hard reading. Writing to his sister Elizabeth, he was jolly about college life and the plain, hard fare of the college table: "I have not injured my health by hard study—this will no doubt be a comfort for you to hear. 2nd, I have not injured the system by an overabundance of rich food, and while boarding in Commons, have carefully refrained from all the rich and tempting variety of pies, cakes, roast turkeys, oyster pies . . . etc. . . . daily spread before me. . . ."

The family were Abolitionists, and Josiah asked for copies of *The Emancipator* and similar antislave literature. But for one who was supposed to be on the way to becoming a minister, he was a lively fellow; he liked *practical* knowledge, drawing and painting, too. On return from a vacation he found Yale so dull that at the first chance he rushed down to New York on the *New York* (eighty-six miles in four hours and forty minutes!) to visit the new exhibition at the National Academy of Design. He spent some four hours there, wandered about the city buying paints and art supplies that he could not get in New Haven, and then returned to the "cidermill track of college life." But

on good days he tried to get away from the place, rambling for three or four miles outside town, looking at flowers and making sketches. And for all his denigration of college life he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and Chi Delta Phi societies.

Josiah graduated from Yale in September 1839 in a flurry of activity; he played the fiddle in the band, he gave an oration, appeared in a colloquy, and was chairman of the commencement committee. He went to a graduation dinner that featured succotash, roast pig, and the female friends of those lucky enough to have them.

He graduated from Yale after three years with a bachelor of arts degree. He knew how to ride, fence, dance, and walk in the country. He could sing in a choir, and play the fiddle, flute, and guitar. He could paint in oils or water colors, and he could draw. He could read French, German, Italian, and Spanish. He hated physics (he called Professor Olmstead, the distinguished teacher, "Our Venerable Professor of Unnatural Philosophy and Stoves"). He liked chemistry, and geology was his hobby. He had decided definitely that he had no calling to the ministry and his family had accepted his decision. So what was he going to do with himself?

He was, in fact, to become one of the major geologists and geographers and travelers in the land.

But this Whitney did not know that, then.

He went home to that warm Puritan family where the table was stacked up at night with Abolitionists and an Episcopalian was regarded as only slightly removed from the devil. The whole family was musical. After dinner the family gathered in the parlor and sang around the piano, or played flute and violin—the instruments differed depending on who was home at the time; with the immense brood, there were always enough for a duet at least.

And in the daylight hours of summer or spring or fall they went on picnics or horseback rides, and the boys escorted their sisters to concerts and lectures and public meetings. They read much in those days; 1839 was the year. They read Jane Austen and Carlyle and Charles Dickens and "that new fellow" who was making such a stir, Alfred Lord Tennyson.

Father Josiah, who had spent quite a sum on young Jo's education, put up with it all for a time, but then began to grow restless. What was Josiah going to do with himself?

Maybe he would be a farmer. An uncle out in Portage, New York, wrote home that he was sick of the Wild West and wanted to come back to the civilized East. Could old Josiah find him a fool big enough to buy the farm?

Young Josiah considered it. It would be a nice adventure. But his uncle said he only went to town once a week and he never knew from one month to the next what was going on in the world.

That was not for Josiah.

How about banking, then? There was always a place in the bank. Josiah tried it. What a bore—the most dreadful kind of work and filled with pitfalls too, handling all that money, where a little mistake could be costly. No, he did not want to be a banker.

Finally he took a deep breath and the plunge.

Down in Philadelphia, Dr. Robert Hare at the University of Pennsylvania was doing great things in chemistry. And if he had to earn a living—which, of course, he did—then Josiah would be a chemist, if his father would agree to finance more education.

Old Josiah would.

So young Jo went to Philadelphia for the fall and winter. But he was back in Northampton in the spring of 1840, as uncertain of his plans as ever.

Old Josiah Whittney had become acquainted with Charles T. Jackson, a chemist and minerologist, who shared mutual interests with his son, despite a disparity in ages. A few years later Jackson would become famous for the invention of anesthesia. Now he was operating a private mineral laboratory in Boston and conducting geological surveys of various states and Canadian provinces.

So old Josiah sent young Josiah to Boston that April with letters and the hope that the young man had found his vocation.

And that is precisely what he had done.

Armed with a handful of letters of introduction from most of the important citizens of Northampton, Josiah Whitney arrived in Boston in the spring of 1840. Dr. Jackson saw him immediately and paid the young man a flattering amount of attention. First he warned that he had no place in his own establishment. Times were hard once more, the country had not recovered from the ravages of the Panic of 1837, so scientific technology was not growing just then.

Jackson did, however, promise to do all he could to help the young man, and he was as good as his word. He entertained Josiah and introduced him around the Boston scientific community. When a few weeks produced no job offers, he took Josiah with him to a meeting of geologists in Philadelphia. Still no luck, but by this time Dr. Jackson had come to feel responsible for his young friend, and, against his better judgment, decided to take him into his own laboratory. He had just signed a contract to do a geological survey for the state of New Hampshire, work that was as much geographical as geological. Jackson and his assistants would establish the height of mountains, the

composition of the mountain ranges, the important peaks, the direction of the mountains, the soils of the state, and they guaranteed to correct the topographical features on the map.

Josiah Whitney was to be a field man, but with no pay.

The reason for "no pay" was stark and political. The New Hampshire state legislature was jealous of letting the survey out to "foreigners" from other states, and tried to insist that Dr. Jackson take as assistants men from New Hampshire. But there were few applicants except the friends and relations of the legislators, and none of these had any experience or knowledge of geology or geography. Dr. Jackson refused, and the legislature refused to pay for anyone else. So Jackson persuaded several of his young men like Whitney, who came from well-to-do families, to support themselves with the half-promise from Jackson that the New Hampshire legislature would come to its senses eventually and pay on a realistic basis.

With a young man named M. B. Williams, Josiah Whitney set out for New Hampshire in a covered wagon drawn by an ancient nag. They took tents, blankets, cooking utensils, food, compasses, clinometers, theodolytes, barometers, and all the other tools of their trade. They were heading into the wilderness.

They roughed it that summer, living largely on ham and eggs for breakfast, dinner, and supper. They got to hate ham and eggs, and longed for anything else, even salt pork. They camped on lakes and they climbed mountains and they took tea with the governor—"a plain farmer." They visited Dartmouth College, and went into the steep fastness of the White Mountains.

Then autumn arrived, and they headed back to Boston, for in those days it was not considered wise to be caught out in the dead of winter in the eastern mountains.

Josiah was still dependent on his father. He ordered the most modern textbooks on chemistry, by Berzelius and Rose, one of which cost $37, and asked for the money. He also needed a new overcoat that year, for another $30, And, of course, there were his expenses. But soon the New Hampshire legislature relented. They wanted the survey, and Dr. Jackson said it would take him years to analyze all the samples by himself, so the lawmakers of the Granite State reluctantly approved a pair of assistants, at $3 per day each, to help Jackson.

The young man from Northampton had a job!

It only lasted until spring. Then the work was done, and New Hampshire was not going to pay for anything else.

Josiah's father had many suggestions.

How about joining the officer corps? He could get Jo an appointment to West Point.

Jo did not want to be a soldier.

How about going to work on *North American Review* or another magazine? Old Jo knew some publishers.

Young Jo did not want to be a magazine editor.

How about using all that expensive knowledge on the lecture circuit, with a course of scientific lectures? A favorite entertainment was to go to the *lyceum* of an evening or a Saturday afternoon—nearly every village had one and it was possible to make a living going from town to town.

Jo would much rather go to Europe or the East Indies or to the Rocky Mountains. "Then you may expect to hear," he wrote his sister Elizabeth, "that the distinguished traveler, Mr. Whitney, was captured by the Blackfoot Indians and being very fat was supposed to have made them a number of excellent meals. . . ."

By this time old Josiah, being a banker, had exhausted both his own sense of humor and his patience. He wrote a firm letter, and young Josiah came back to Northampton, and into the law office of Charles P. Huntington, one of the bastions of the Massachusetts bar. There, young Jo languished all summer long, dreaming of the mountains of New Hampshire. All he learned of the law, he said, was how to sweep out the office and dust behind Blackstone. That made no difference, said his father sternly. Josiah, Jr., had been given every latitude, and he had been unable to discover a profession for himself. Now he would follow the family's wishes and go to Harvard Law School.

What old Jo said was true, in its way. For what young Josiah wanted to do was not a profession at all. Dr. Jackson was a medical doctor who had come by chance into this work that suited him so well. Professor Benjamin Silliman at Yale was really a lawyer who had been an enthusiastic amateur chemist and geologist and had wangled his way onto the faculty thus to meet a previously unseen need. There was no scientific community in America—no profession of chemist or geologist. The only chemistry that was taught at all was analytical, and this study was developed just enough to meet the needs of medicine. Scientific training and the many fields that would develop in the next century were totally unknown. Good reason, then, for old Josiah to believe that his son was dreaming a pipe dream to want to be a scientist and try to make his living doing things nobody wanted done.

They packed young Jo off to Cambridge, assuring him that this was the only way; he could earn his living as a lawyer and he could indulge his flair for chemistry and geology as a hobby. To make sure he would stay, the family engaged rooms for him in Cambridge.

But on the journey eastward Josiah fretted. And then when he went to the rooms, he found that the landlady had let them out. Good,

he said to himself, and hastened to Boston to his old rooming house, where Miss Lane took him in at seven dollars a week. He went to see Dr. Jackson, who supported him in his desire to follow this "non-profession" of the rockhound and assured him that geology and chemistry *were* professions in Europe and that if he could get his father to send him there, he could not but succeed in time. Jackson also offered to take him in and let him live with the Jackson family if his father would not agree.

So there it was. Young Jo laid it out in a letter: ". . . it seems to be that the first question of all to be settled is—shall I go on with my scientific education or shall I give up in despair of success and try something else? Should the answer be 'Go on,' I pledge myself faithfully, untiringly, and economically to pursue the best path which can be marked out for me. If convenient, please send $50. . . ."

Old Josiah watched as all his plans for the boy exploded. But he was a long-suffering father, and he not only sent the $50 but agreed to support young Josiah in Europe; Jo sailed in May. For the first few months he wandered about, a tourist, and crossed the Alps five times on foot, as was the popular thing to do. But in November he was ready to settle down, and he spent the academic year studying at the Ecole des Mines, learning mining engineering from the finest experts in the world. The next year he amused himself again in the summer, and even visited St. Petersburg and Moscow. In the fall he went to Rome to study chemistry. In the spring he was back in Paris at the College de France for geological lectures and a trip with the famous French geologist Elié de Beaumont. That summer he was in Berlin, the scientific capital, studying in Dr. Rammelsberg's chemical laboratory.

By the spring of 1843 old Josiah was beginning to cavil at the expense. He warned the boy, now twenty-four years old, that the $1,500 he was advancing him was the last, and that young Josiah would have to begin to support himself. Young Jo accepted the inevitable gracefully. He undertook to translate a short book on blow-pipe analysis by Berzelius, and his father again agreed to advance money for this new venture. That would keep young Jo another three months in Berlin.

Berlin certainly was *the* place to be: a city of 300,000, residence of the court of the German emperors, and home of the finest university in Europe—and the finest teachers: Humboldt, the astronomer-naturalist and philologist; Von Buch; Weiss; Rammelsberg. . . . Jo Whitney was immersed totally in Europe and he did not want to come home, for every day he saw new ways he could learn more about the sciences of nature. But his father wrote again: there would be no more money under any conditions. One of the uncles had failed in business,

and that made further assistance impossible. Young Josiah must come home and begin to support himself immediately.

In the winter of 1845, after an absence of three years, Josiah Whitney, Jr., did come home, with a large library and his head filled with ideas.

In the three years that Josiah had been away, the industrial revolution had made vital changes in fields that would affect his prospects. The huge copper and iron resources of the Lake Superior region had been unearthed, and Dr. Jackson, as consulting expert for several mining companies, had more employment than he could manage. Suddenly a profession had appeared on the horizon.

The translation of Berzelius finished, Josiah was taken on again by Dr. Jackson and spent the summer of 1845 working as field geologist for the Isle Royale Copper Company. He also had work as consulting chemist to the Cocheco Calico Print Works of Dover, New Hampshire. Cotton manufacturing (remember the first Asa Whitney?) was flourishing in New England after the fruits of Eli's invention were harvested. The Germans had the dyes. The Germans knew secrets of cloth manufacture that the Americans had not yet mastered. So there was opportunity again. Josiah saved his money, traded again on the good offices of his father, whose situation had eased, and headed for Europe. He entered a laboratory in Berlin, then went to Giessen, where the famous chemist Liebig taught and maintained a large laboratory with fifty chemists working for him. And here he met the chemist Wolcott Gibbs, who was to become a lifelong friend.

Whitney and Gibbs were put to work on sheep's bile. Their next-door neighbor was working with rotten eggs. Someone else was working with horsemeat, still another with cows' eyes, and yet another with overripe cheese. Each day the Herr Professor marched around among his students, examining their work, prodding and probing, and giving free advice in a Prussian manner that at first upset the young American. He grew to accept it.

That study lasted until the spring of 1847, when Josiah came home. During the winter, a tragedy brought opportunity for the young man. Dr. Douglass Houghton, the state geologist of Michigan, was caught in a snow squall while working on the geology of Lake Superior and drowned. Dr. Jackson was appointed state geologist and offered Josiah—at the princely salary of $5 a day—a whole district to himself (an area as large as the state of Massachusetts) if he would come as his assistant. Josiah had planned to become a chemist and return to Giessen—he was coming home only because two sisters were being married that spring. He switched and decided that his future lay in America and in geology.

So Whitney went to Michigan. His skills at painting and drawing were of inestimable value in the work ahead of him. His knowledge of chemistry could not have been of more value in precipitating minerals and discovering geological information about the land. In other words, the various odd interests and studies that he had undertaken seemed to mesh like a fine-toothed machine to create the discipline of a new science. From the beginning there was no question but that he was equipped to outstrip virtually all others by his interest and education.

Many scientists were trained in this "school" of Michigan, and many were the aspects of science begun here. Jo's young brother, William Dwight Whitney, came out as botanist and ornithologist. Wolcott Gibbs was there. Charles A. Joy, another of Jackson's students, helped Josiah, this same Charles Joy who would become professor of chemistry at Columbia University and editor of *Scientific American*, and there was John Wells Foster, who later became president of the Chicago Academy. Josiah here began his first efforts—which he was to pursue with distinction—at the almost unknown art of topographical surveying. He got to know other surveyors and other scientists: James Hall, the first of the American paleontologists, and Colonel Charles Whittlesay, and even Louis Agassiz, who brought a party of Cantabrigians out for a summer's work in the lake country.

And Josiah contributed in another way to the development of science in America.

The most important book that he had brought home from Europe on that first educational sojourn of his was a Sanskrit dictionary. From that book his brother, young William Dwight Whitney, developed a love for languages and an interest in eastern mysteries that was to lead him to become the foremost expert in the field in the United States.

William had his vocational problems, too. His father tried to push him, as he had Jo, into the banking business, and that was a trial. However, the elder Whitney soon learned that this son was of no more financial mind than the other and he gave in gracefully. William studied at Yale and then went to Berlin in 1850 to study under the great philologist Weber, and then to Tübingen. There he settled down to edit the *Arharva Veda* and translate this work for the Western world.

Josiah Whitney, having gambled with Dr. Jackson's backing, had won, and his life was turning out just as Jackson had indicated it would after the investment in the European education. He was much in demand as consulting geologist, as the mining companies expanded. He opened a laboratory of his own in Brookline, Massachusetts, and began employing younger men as he had once been employed. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences during that August of 1850.

Next year he appeared as a star witness for Louis Agassiz in a celebrated libel case brought by J. T. Foster, who had put together a "ridiculous geological chart" which the forthright Agassiz had condemned out of hand. Whitney's testimony was instrumental in Agassiz's successful defense of the case. The two became—and remained—friends.

From that time on it was one triumph after another. He was hired to come down to the anthracite coal basin in Pennsylvania (where one Asa Whitney had made that second fortune in his tricky extension of the rights of the Reading Railroad). With Latin scholar George Martin Lane and astronomer Benjamin Apthorp Gould, Jo Whitney set up a bachelor establishment—called Clover Den—in a big house in Cambridge. Soon the astronomer Joseph Winlock joined them. Whitney valued this place because it gave him room to store his scientific library as well as proximity to the resources of Harvard's library. For now he was engaged in a book for Lippincott, Grambo of Philadelphia, a master work called *The Metallic Wealth of the United States.*

It was a genteel existence, with servants and comfort in Cambridge, trips here and there to the wild regions to investigate and report, but always the comfort that money could buy. Josiah had succeeded beyond his wildest dreams.

What a household it was at "the den!" Whitney's books were everywhere downstairs, and Astronomer Winlock mounted the fourth largest telescope in the United States on top of the henhouse. When the whole group was at home, there were gay entertainments for men and ladies, and many a pipe was smoked and many an important idea discussed in front of the cheery fire in the library.

Winlock built a banquet table. They christened it with a dinner at which all the guests appeared togaed (in blankets) and sandaled, and dined in the Roman fashion, with their servant, Marshall, as "chained slave at the door." Conversation that evening was in Latin—all other tongues were taboo.

They kept a dog, which startled the household by having puppies at five o'clock in the morning. They had strange scientific names for each other—Pinakothecarius (Lane), Glyptothecarius (Winlock), Bpothecarius (Gould), and Apothecarius (Whitney). In the middle of the 1850s they spent much time going to theater, to opera, and to political meetings, most of which concerned slavery. They applauded the Rev. Dr. Theodore Parker of Boston when he inveighed against slavery; they damned the Rev. Dr. Blagden of the Old South when he insisted that slavery was of divine origin. Whitney insisted that if the Kansas-Nebraska bill (the Missouri Compromise) passed, he was going "to pack up and get ready to move to some infidel, despotic

country where such good democratic Christians as [Franklin] Pierce and [Stephen] Douglas don't grow. . . ."

But "the den" was to be deserted soon enough. Whitney published his book—which was an instant success and brought him an enormous acclaim—and very shortly afterward he married Louisa Howe, Gould's cousin and one of the ladies who had frequented "the den" in the partying season.

It was a good thing that Whitney's reputation was secure, for Louisa was a divorced woman. She had been married for fifteen years and then had broken it off and married Whitney. Their honeymoon was spent in a covered wagon, "oxing it up" the north shore of Lake Superior, where Whitney was doing a chore for one of the mining companies. After a pleasant summer, Whitney decided they must move to New York and they did, to a little apartment on Clinton Place off Washington Square.

Now Whitney found himself strangely bound. He could not travel off to the ends of the country and leave his bride, and yet he had to. So they moved to Northampton, where much of the time Louisa stayed in the family mansion while Josiah tramped around looking at rocks in various out of the way places. He had an appointment at the University of Iowa as chemist and geologist, but he did not take it seriously. He did some work at Union College, and he moved back and forth on field trips for various mining companies.

Honors began to come. He was elected a fellow of the Societé Geologique de France, and the new, burgeoning Academies of Science at Philadelphia and Chicago. Twenty years earlier, when he had wondered what to do to follow his interests, there had been no such organizations, but now, in 1856, American science was coming alive.

Although Whitney did not get on well with the Iowa authorities, he undertook the survey of the state's geology, and then had such difficulty getting paid he was forever drawing bills on his father, the banker. Old Josiah must have been a saint—he paid and never complained, although occasionally he asked when he might see his money, and then young Josiah wrote remarkably explicit and persuasive explanations.

Louisa stayed home. She was content to live among the family in Northampton and raise babies. Their first child, Eleanor, was born in the winter of 1856.

Now the changes and excitements of American life were reflected in Josiah's work. The dull Iowa period ended, and he had an offer from a group of New York capitalists to go out to California and Mexico. These mining magnates had just bought a large parcel of land in lower

California and they wanted it surveyed for mineral content. They were hoping for another Sutter's Creek bonanza.

As Whitney pondered this offer, he attended the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and saw all his old friends. What wasn't stirring now in 1857! Agassiz was there arguing about the origin of the human race; geologists just back from the Rocky Mountains were full of their subject; someone else was touting the Pacific Railroad (not cousin Asa, either). But what really impressed Whitney at the meeting was the pomposity of all these scientists in these excited days.

"Oh, *Potzdonnerwetter*," he wrote his wife back home. "How pious we are getting in this nation of filibusters [soldiers of fortune] slave-holders, and speculators [i.e. swindlers]."

Soon Whitney was heading for California, largely through the influence of his sister Elizabeth. That sister, who had been Whitney's favorite when he was at Yale, had married S. Osgood Putnam, who in 1860 was the secretary of the California Steam Navigation Company and a force in state politics. In the spring of 1861 Putnam managed to persuade Governor John G. Downey to appoint a state geologist—and he got Whitney the post. Agassiz could only have helped, when he declared that Whitney "has not only no superior, but not even an equal in these United States."

It was, said everybody in the country who knew about such matters, "the only appointment ever made in California on any other than political grounds," and as such it was a seven-day wonder around San Francisco and Sacramento.

So the Whitneys moved to California, by way of Aspinwall in the Central American Isthmus, where they changed from ship to shore transport and went over to the Pacific side and caught another vessel to the west coast of the United States. They brought a maid and a handyman—people traveled in some style in those days, and the Whitneys were no exception.

They had a rough trip, bad weather on the way south, a hot and steaming isthmus crossing, and more bad weather coming north. But Putnam met them at the wharf, and had an apartment ready for them in a proper section of San Francisco and soon they were dining with the governor, while the newspapers commented pleasantly on the survey, which everyone seemed to approve. Josiah Whitney, short and stocky, like his cousin Asa, with a ring of whiskers around his face, and thinning hair, was a distinguished figure, and Californians were impressed. Whitney said he had ten thousand applications for jobs to help conduct the survey

There was money available. Straight off, Whitney collected

$10,000, and then headed down to Los Angeles to work on the Bernadino and Temescal mountain ranges. Colonel John C. Fremont was his guide, and soon they were hobnobbing with agents of the Rothchild bank. They rode to a Mariposa estate, and they spent jolly evenings around the fire.

But then it was off into the mountains, accompanied by a Spanish brother-in-law of the governor who was their liaison with the Mexicans. It was a rugged trip in a rugged country:

"We have a medium sized wagon—on thorough braces, drawn by four mules, and five saddle mules in addition. Of course all the rigging is Californian, closely resembling the Mexican—saddles with big wooden stirrups, high pommels, and straight cantles. Each man carries a revolver and a big knife, and besides we have two Sharp's carbines and two double barreled fowling pieces, so that we could do considerable shooting in case of necessity. We never go out from camp, or in town in the evening, without looking to our arms. . . . Everyone says it is necessary to be well armed, and that if you are well armed you will probably be let alone. Our mule driver was once attacked close by this place, by two robbers, but fought them off, wounding one and frightening away the other. . . ."

They surveyed. They lived on game and fish and beef they bought from the *rancheros*. They came back to San Francisco, with its fleas and high prices. But only for a while, for the survey covered a huge territory, eight hundred miles long, with nine-tenths of the 160,000 square miles mountain or desert. It was, as Josiah put it, the most overpowering country he had ever visited—as large as Great Britain, Ireland, Belgium, Hanover and Bavaria all rolled into one. He estimated that if he had a complete map of the state (which did not exist) and twice as many people and a lot more money, he might finish the surveying task allotted him in 150 years. "Having our own maps to make . . . we shall be through in 450 years or thereabouts."

But Whitney laid down a plan. He would spend the first year or two going over the whole state except the High Sierra, and thus establish the main features of California's geology. He began.

Louisa, who was having health problems, went to the Yosemite on an excursion. By coach to Sonora, and then fifteen more miles over rough coach road, and finally 39.5 miles by mule or horseback—it was a kill or cure kind of treatment. She came back two months later much improved.

Whitney traveled everywhere and got to know everyone, including Governor Leland Stanford. In the fall of this first year he stopped field work and spent the winter in the San Francisco offices, working up the materials for the first report of the survey.

He was in California during the terrible time of 1862, when the whole state flooded and a third of the taxable property was destroyed. The overland mail did not run at all for ten days, and most of the roads were washed out for much longer. The result was a tremendous inflation—with money loaned out at 4 percent per month.

The Civil War made life difficult for everyone. The state government did not have the money to pay the costs allocated by the legislature. Whitney had to borrow from his father, and his father was reluctant to lend because of the uncertainties of the war. The elder Whitney even suggested that, given the conditions that existed, the scientist abandon the survey. But Whitney knew how important a scientific achievement this was, and he refused; he scraped and scratched and managed to get along.

"The governor and Chief Justice are just as badly off as I am as far as their personal salaries are concerned." He had a talk with Governor Stanford, who was friendly, and he convinced old J. D. Whitney, Sr., who finally, from Northampton, Massachusetts, financed the California survey. Eventually he was paid off, but who really ever knew that during the Civil War part of California's finances were being handled in Massachusetts? At times the state owed the Northampton Bank $15,000 and more—the whole appropriation for the survey for the year.

Jo Whitney surveyed Mount Shasta, and determined its actual height within forty feet. He surveyed other peaks. He supervised the collection of a vast amount of California natural history. And in a way, he was responsible for the first geographic survey of China. Out in California Whitney got to know Baron Friedrich von Richthofen, of the famous German family. The baron's English was rudimentary, and he was pleased to find someone who spoke fluent German, as Whitney did after all those years in Berlin and other scientific centers. Von Richthofen became interested in the survey, and Whitney persuaded him to undertake a geographic survey of China, which Richthofen did a few years later, to specifications he and Whitney drew up while sitting around a California campfire.

By 1865 the California reports were being published, a five-hundred-page study of general geology and a similar book on paleontology. Then Whitney moved further afield. He surveyed Mount Rainier. He surveyed Mount Hood in Oregon. He became involved in a petroleum scandal because he insisted there was no petroleum in California, although several companies had floated multimillion-dollar stock issues in the belief that petroleum existed in quantity. The ensuing unpleasantness cooled Whitney's enthusiasm and that of some of his friends in California, and he began to move away from the

California survey. Also after the survey had progressed so far, California's politicians lost interest, too. But Whitney continued, although after 1865 much of his work was done back in Cambridge. He settled down there and started a mining school for Harvard, and then published at his own expense two more volumes of the California survey. He arranged to give a number of lectures in the East, and more and more of his survey work was turned over to subordinates.

Out of it all came one lasting monument to Josiah, Jr.—although it might as easily have come to Josiah, Sr., who financed the work. A pair of Whitney's assistants up in the mountains found a peak higher than all the rest, and they took the prerogative of explorer and geographer and named it Mount Whitney, after the leader of the survey.

After fourteen years, Whitney decided he needed a vacation, and he and his wife and daughter went to Europe for a year. In Germany he saw old friends and made new ones, he attended scientific meetings, and then he came home to take a well-endowed professorship at Harvard.

Times had changed. No longer were the Whitneys contemptuous of Harvard and its Unitarian ways—both had grown more tolerant with the years. There were more California reports to come out, and in 1882 he was still working on aspects of the survey. His wife died that year and he buried her in Northampton, not far from the huge elm on the Whitney estate's great lawn. He went back to Cambridge and bought a house on Divinity Avenue near the Agassiz Museum: it became the center of Whitney family activity, for old Josiah had died in 1869 and his wife in 1876. Jo's brother William, who had shown such philological skill all these years, became editor-in-chief of the *Century Dictionary.* Jo helped with all the work concerning geology and chemistry.

Jo Whitney taught at Harvard for thirty-one years. He summered at Lake Sunapee, New Hampshire. William had died two years earlier, and Jo's world had changed. These were lonely years.

In the summer of his seventy-sixth year, Jo Whitney went to Sunapee as usual. One day he was stricken with a heart attack and died. He was buried at Northampton beside his wife and daughter. With a somber sense of propriety, the family chose his headstone, a huge glacial boulder of rose quartzite from the Michigan country that he had surveyed so many years before. The editors of *The Nation* memorialized him then. They called him the Cato of American Science.

4/ The Man Who Sang Basso Profundo

By the middle of the nineteenth century the Whitneys had certainly branched out. From one fork of the family (Eli's) arose a set of industrialists. From another came development of America's railways. From a third branch came several scholars and men of science, and from still another branch came one of the finest musicians in America, Myron William Whitney, direct descendent of old John Whitney of England, who had settled in Watertown so many years before.

Myron's father, William Whitney, had started his business life as a shoemaker in the eighteenth century, and ended it as a farmer in the nineteenth. When he died in the early 1800s he was the oldest citizen of Ashby, Massachusetts, the town in which he grew up and in which Myron was born.

Although William Whitney was not a success financially, he did have a fine musical sense; he was a master of the bass viol and head of the choir at the Ashby Congregational Church. Myron, then, grew up in as musical a family as did Josiah and William Whitney of Northampton, but Myron's life was to emphasize this Whitney characteristic much more strongly than any of the others; music for Myron became not just an avocation but a way of life.

In 1852 Myron went to Boston. He had a magnificent bass voice, and if he needed some polishing, there was employment to be found in the many churches of the city. For religious fervor struck New England in the 1850s, a part of the syndrome that included intensive abolitionism and moral preparation for the coming war against the South. Big religion meant big pageantry—and that meant music.

In Boston, Myron studied with the well-known singing teacher E. H. Frost, who prepared him for the stage. On Christmas Day, 1858, Myron Whitney made his public debut in an oratorio—*Messiah*—which was performed at the old Boston Tabernacle. The acclaim was instantaneous and magical, in this community which took its music seriously.

Myron Whitney maintained himself during this period of his life

as bass soloist at the Tremont Temple, but he was extremely active in the strenuous musical world of New England.

When war came in 1861, like many another professional, Myron had to make the serious decision. He was twenty-six years old. Before him, his teachers and the critics said, stretched a great career in music would he but grasp it. On the other hand stood service in the cause of the Union. He was married, and had children (three), and the combination of responsibilities made the decision easy. He chose his career, which was not hard to do; there were plenty of plowboys to fill the ranks of the Blue.

For the next five years, all America was muted by the thunder of war, and the musical world was no exception. Then came the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, which again threw the country into doubt and quiet, and immediately afterward the outbreak of the Black Reconstruction program that kept the North in almost as much emotional turmoil as had Abolition. In 1868, having saved money for ten years, Myron Whitney went with his family to Florence, to study voice with the celebrated maestro Luigi Vannucini. He could, said critics in the Boston area, become the world's foremost basso if he would perfect his techniques.

For three years Myron lived on his savings in the beauty of Florence, perfecting, perfecting. Not until 1871 was Maestro Luigi ready to let him go into the far more critical concert world of Europe. In that year Myron Whitney and his family went to England, which in the 1870s was known as the home of the oratorio—the musical form in which this Whitney excelled.

The opening performance was scheduled for Birmingham. Everything depended on it. A failure there would rule out London, but a success in Birmingham would assure him of a fair hearing on the London musical stage.

His performance was one part of a major musical festival at Birmingham that year. He was to sing in *Elijah.*

He went, he sang, he conquered. The critics said his voice was a rich, resonant bass and—with kudos to Maestro Vannucini—that it was well trained. It certainly was—those countless hours of practice and exercises were now going to prove valuable at last. Not only did he have the voice, but he had that other indefinable essential for the performer on the musical stage—presence. He was refined, he was dignified as became a great basso, and he sang with a classical repose that indicated his perfect knowledge of the music and the discipline of his training.

It seemed a long way back to the tremulous debut in 1858 in Boston, and a grand improvement over the Boston years when he had

appeared regularly with the Handel and Haydn Society in oratorios and other performances. Could they but hear him now. . . .

But not yet. More conquests were to come. By popular acclaim Whitney won the role of Polyphemus in the festival's production of *Acis and Galatea*, and once again there was great applause by the expert audience at the festival. When it ended Whitney had given the most magnificent performance of his career.

Next stop that summer was at the festival of music at Oxford. Myron Whitney went there with growing reputation. The Oxford performances added to that reputation, and they were followed by a seven-week engagement at the most famous of British concert halls, London's Covent Garden. Even to appear here was a triumph for an American singer; added to the triumph was Myron Whitney's complete success.

What was to be next?

There were offers from the Continent. He might go on to Paris and try the opera, but opera did not offer the basso the same range and opportunity that it offered the tenor and the baritone. He might, then, go to Berlin and Vienna, where the oratorio was more appreciated. But Myron Whitney and his family had been away from their native land for four years, and they felt it was time to go home. If opportunity came in America, which was more than likely, given his English notices, would it not be best to cast his lot with the musical world of his native country? Myron Whitney decided that was so.

In 1871, then, the Whitneys were homeward bound, first of all to fill an engagement in Chicago. There he was scheduled to make an appearance with the enormously successful Christine Nilsson, the darling of the concert stage, in that old favorite, *Messiah.* Imogene Brown and Annie Louise Cary were also on the program.

Once again success—and forever afterward there was to be success. For as the Chicago critics said, Myron Whitney was truly "a great musician, of a variety seldom produced anywhere and never before born in America."

In his late thirties Whitney had now achieved this plateau, and remarkably enough he was not only respected for his singing and his high level of general culture, achieved in the years in Florence, but he was liked by most performers. He was a big, genial fellow with a ready smile, and a handsome wife and children. He was something of a humorist, which delighted the ladies in particular, because his humor was gentle and never sharp. As were few of the singers he knew, he was sought as a dinner companion for what he could contribute and not because he was a prize of the world of arts to be shown off.

That winter of 1871-72 Whitney spent in and around Boston,

working with the Henry Clay Barnabee concert troupe, which was prominent in that time. That winter he sang in *The Marriage of Figaro, The Chimes of Normandy, Il Trovatore,* and *The Bohemian Girl.* He left the troupe for a time to meet some other engagements and was replaced by a basso named Cowles. The change caused an uproar. The critics remarked that where Myron Whitney was sonorous, Cowles was ponderous. Soon Whitney was back with the Barnabee tour for the winter, and they added a few American operas composed by Reginald De Koven. American music was getting a real start in these years.

Barnabee's was an interesting troupe. It represented the first attempt by Americans to show how well American music was progressing. Prior to this time most traveling groups were European; there simply had not been enough of an American musical tradition to give the players and singers the confidence they needed to plan, practice, and sustain a long tour. A few Americans might tour with a European company, but in 1871 this situation changed. Barnabee was the first American to present an all-American cast, often with Myron Whitney as the star. There was Myron Whitney, son of a Massachusetts shoemaker, singing opposite Jessie Bartless Davis, daughter of an Illinois farmer. True, this American musical development was not in the tradition of the European gentility. But what was America in 1872 but a nation of farmers and shoemakers? To be sure, there were some like the Astors and the Vanderbilts and the Paynes and the Roosevelts and Goelets who pretended to wealth and culture. But Astor had been a hide dealer and real estate shark; Vanderbilt started life as a ferryman; the Paynes were longer farmers and shopkeepers than millionaires; the Goelets and Roosevelts went back to a Dutch patricianship—but they too came originally from humble stock. Whitney and Miss Davis were strictly in the American tradition—people of the soil, from a revolutionary country and a revolutionary society that was maturing and seeking culture for its own sake.

Whitney spent the next few years moving back and forth across the Atlantic, remaining most of the time in America but visiting England. He was always welcomed there, far more than on the Continent, which seemed to have a sufficiency of bassos.

In May 1873, Whitney went to Cincinnati to be principal soloist for that city's music festival. It was the first such festival ever held there. The promoter was a musical genius by the name of Theodore Thomas, who was also the conductor. He invited Whitney to sing because he knew of Whitney's mastery of the oratorio.

The program for this first festival included Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum* and selections from Gluck's *Orpheus.* The orchestra was pronounced wonderful, the singing, grand; the festival brought thousands

to the grounds to enjoy a musical event unique in that area, where Middle West met South.

From this point on there was no major American musical celebration to which Whitney was not at least invited. He dominated completely his own section of the musical world and could pick and choose his engagements.

That summer of 1873 was successful once again, followed by more concerts abroad. This period brought about the great awakening of American music. Maurice Grau brought to America Anton Rubinstein and the great Wieniawski, and they toured America, often with Theodore Thomas, the conductor, in a hail of flowers and successes. Wherever these great artists appeared they were lauded, and Thomas remarked at the end of the tour that "the surge of American music had truly begun."

Whitney appeared with Theodore Thomas again at the New York festival that year, along with the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston. There was another basso in the troupe, J. F. Rudolphsen, but Whitney walked off with all the honors—as he did nearly every time he sang.

In 1874 and 1875 Whitney found the reception of American audiences broadening. More and more cities wanted their own series of concerts, their own orchestral presentation, their own operas. He went to Boston and to Brooklyn and New York, which had their own symphonies. Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington called.

Philadelphia brought a new triumph. In 1875 that city's authorities were preparing for the Philadelphia Centennial Celebration, and they employed Theodore Thomas to be musical director. In the spring of 1876 Thomas was on hand, planning and issuing invitations to various artists to appear. The festivities were opened by a Thomas concert.

On May 10, the orchestra opened with a "Grand Centennial Inauguration March;" then the "Centennial Hymn," which was composed to a poem written especially by John Greenleaf Whittier, and then came another poem by Sydney Lanier; and a cantata, *Centennial Meditation of Columbia*, in which the soloist was Myron Whitney, accompanied by the orchestra and a chorus.

More triumphs that year brought Whitney to the decision that he would become a purely American musician. He would not travel again to Europe for concert series; he would stay at home and help raise the caliber of American presentation and acceptance.

He liked the Boston area and he liked working with Barnabee, whom he had known for years. In the spring of 1878 Barnabee was in England and heard one of the first performances of the Gilbert and

Sullivan comic opera *H.M.S. Pinafore* at the Opera Comique. He came back to coach *Pinafore* in Boston, and found a ready cast in the Boston Museum Musical Company, which included Marie Wainwright and Joseph Haworth. Also he soon discovered that Adelaide Phillips, the grand opera contralto, wanted to sing Buttercup.

"Sing it?" demanded Mr. Tompkins, the manager of the Boston Theater. "You know they *talk* it." And besides, he was skittish about the possible performance of the Boston Museum Company, which was not considered to be equal to grand opera by any means.

"We will *sing* it," said Miss E. H. Ober, who represented the company and a number of other artists, including Myron Whitney. And further, to make sure that they *sang* it, she was going to get La Phillips and Whitney and a handsome, full-voiced tenor named Tom Karl to sing it with them. Whitney was just coming home from a long tour with his own company, and Karl was finishing up work with the Parepa-Rosa Opera Company.

"If you can get Whitney and Karl," said Mr. Tompkins, "you go ahead and engage your singers, without regard to cost. . . ."

Quite an invitation that, but Tompkins did not really think Whitney would stoop to comic opera. He did not know his man.

Whitney not only agreed, he insisted. And at Miss Ober's office in the Boston Music Hall, the cast was signed, one by one, Whitney among them. On April 14, 1879, *Pinafore* opened at the Boston Theater to a packed house. The cast, said the Boston papers, was ideal. Myron Whitney was adding a new dimension to his art and was singing brilliantly, as usual.

For nine weeks the Boston Ideal Opera Company (as they called themselves) "wowed them" in Boston. So successful was the performance that they added von Suppé's comic opera *Fatinitza*, and the next year they added another Gilbert and Sullivan piece and went on tour.

At the end of this second season, Myron Whitney was stolen away from the comic opera by the American Opera Company to undertake another "first" in America. Mrs. Jeanette Thurber of New York had a purely American idea. Because foreign languages were so little known in the United States, grand opera was suffering. Who in Milwaukee wanted to spend a night listening to Myron or anyone else singing Puccini in flawless Italian? Damned few, said the forthright Mrs. Thurber, and so she convinced Whitney and several other fine singers that they would not be sacrificing their art if they performed all these great operas—*Carmen, La Bohème, Il Trovatore*—in the English language.

Just before Whitney left the Boston troupe, it went to Chicago, where he sang *Pinafore* for one last time with Richard Mansfield in the role of the admiral.

From 1880 on, Whitney could determine his own performances. Soon, in addition to his opera work, he was singing as regularly as he could with Theodore Thomas's symphony. Thomas had grown to be the giant of the age, the organizer, composer, and conductor who was to his own art what Whitney was to his.

After a trip to Europe in 1880, Thomas returned to become the leader of American symphonic music. He conducted the Brooklyn Philharmonic and the New York Philharmonic, and brought choruses to sing with these orchestras. His own orchestra went on tour, and often Myron Whitney was with it.

In 1882, Theodore Thomas and Whitney were at the New York Festival, an event promoted by 163 of the leading citizens of the period. George William Curtis was chairman of the group, and Cyrus W. Field was vice-chairman.

That year was very busy—in May they were in Cincinnati for the fourth festival, and then in Chicago, and then to Cleveland for the summer festival. Milwaukee, St. Louis, and half a dozen other cities were all claiming musical attention these days, and Whitney appeared in them all, sometimes with Thomas and his orchestra, and sometimes with other groups and other musicians.

During the winter of 1883-84, and the next year too, Whitney was on tour with the Thomas orchestra. They gave concerts in New York and inaugurated a series of Young People's Concerts, to interest American youth in fine music. They also began Sunday afternoon concerts, to attract working men and their families.

In the spring came the famous March to the Sea—a national tour of the continent from Atlantic to Pacific—during which the Thomas orchestra and Whitney and other singers gave sixty-five concerts.

Whitney now sang Beethoven arias and Mozart—selections from *Frithjof* and *Lohengrin*. He could do anything, and he did it with what Theodore Thomas called "unusual brilliance."

The American Opera Company failed in 1888, largely because of bad management (Thomas always said the idea *should* have succeeded). Whitney still had his connection with the Thomas orchestra, but that group disbanded a few months later. The disbanding marked a sad day for American music, but there was nothing else to be done. Many American cities had their own philharmonic societies and would naturally prefer to hear their own orchestras. The result was that the Thomas orchestra had been forced to tour all year long, and this became tiresome after several years. The musicians parted sadly.

Thomas undertook a number of appearances as guest conductor with various philharmonic orchestras. He had led an era of American music, bringing the finest orchestra in the land across the country innumerable times. Now it had come to an end.

Sensing this letdown in musical appreciation in America, and feeling that he had passed his prime in his middle fifties, Myron Whitney retired from the concert stage in 1890 and settled down with his family at Sandwich, Massachusetts. He was comfortable, and he lived a pleasant life until his death in 1910. But music was never the same without him. He was one of the finest singers ever heard in the world.

III
The Distaff Side

Tracing the story of any family becomes a problem after the first few generations, for families sprawl out, various members head in strange directions or stay put in lives that would be boring to recount. Most difficult, and a problem that genealogists have not tackled very successfully in the twentieth century, is the place of women in these family chronicles. For wives, though the central figures in many of these families, are not truly "of" the family, as far as blood is concerned. And as Commodore Vanderbilt stoutly maintained about his handful of daughters, when they married and took other men's names, they "went out of the family" and were of only peripheral interest to the story.

The proper manner of managing family histories and giving adequate credit to women, then, persists, and many a biographer has fallen victim to failures in this field.

Fortunately, in the story of the Whitneys, two women named Whitney stand out so completely that there is no question as to how they should be treated. Neither of these women married, so they were born Whitneys and they died Whitneys, and there can be no gainsaying their part in the family chronicle. Both were absolutely outstanding in their fields. Both contributed in great measure to the quality of American life, and each, in her own way, to the long struggle for women's rights in America.

5/ The Lady Who Would Not Conform

Some of the descendants of John Whitney of England and Watertown were lucky enough to find their sustenance right at home in Watertown. They remained, farming the sparse acres and going into business ventures as this section of Massachusetts grew increasingly industrial in nature. In a direct line came Nathaniel Ruggles Whitney, who was clerk of the Middlesex Courts, and who married Sally Stone, the daughter of one of the area's most successful families.

Nathaniel and his family were well off. He raised a number of children and educated every one in a manner far superior to that of most other Whitneys. Anne Whitney, who was born on September 2, 1821, was to have an education and a life much different from that of the usual middle-class woman of her era. She was to be one of the earliest of liberated women.

Anne was born into the most tolerant household in town. Her mother and father were among that growing number of rebels in the early nineteenth century who turned vigorously against the restrictions of the Puritans. They joined a rebellious sect called the Liberal Christianity, which held, among other heretical beliefs, the idea that men and women were created equal and that women should have the same rights and privileges in life that were enjoyed by men.

Such heresy, of course, was harder to practice than to believe, for institutions like Yale and Harvard were not about to take in women. Such stirrings would lead to the establishment of Vassar and Radcliffe, and Emma Willard's school for young gentlewomen. In the 1830s these sentiments were just beginning to promote action. There were educated women in America in the 1820s, but they had a hard time getting their education. Even if Father agreed to put up the money, there were few places to go, and many of the traveling scholars who tutored young ladies were little more than frauds.

Anne was educated nonetheless, at private academies for young ladies. And there somehow she got the idea that she was going to "be somebody" in her own right; she was not going to sit at home doing

needlework all winter, fretting at the piano, baking and mending, and toying with a garden in the summer. Even in school she began writing poetry, and her instructors were intelligent enough to praise and encourage her very real talent.

In her twenties, Anne was courted, but she chose not to marry, even though she was an attractive and desirable female from one of the best families in Watertown. Her brother went into business and soon began to do very well for himself, which made her even more of a catch.

But no, Anne Whitney's smiles were for the editors of the *North American Review* and *Harper's Weekly* and *Atlantic Monthly*, to whom she sent her poems. She also published in the local newspapers and various other journals, and in her middle twenties was well known in New England. That success offended no one; poetry was accepted as a gentle art at which women might excel without stirring up the male animals.

Anne was a strong and healthy girl, and with her open nature and attractive face she was soon invited to attend some of the gatherings that were to dominate Boston literary society in these years. She attended lyceum and lecture, which was proper, and teas and readings. She got to know Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Theodore Parker and was soon something of a *belle célèbrèe* of the literary scene. Through these men and Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner, Anne became an early convert to the Abolition cause, and some of her poems were dedicated to this endeavor. Harriett Spofford, who included Anne in a study titled *A Little Book of Friends*, called her "a poet of the antique mold, one whose verse was strong-winged, and eagle-eyed, glorious with height and depth of flight, with luster and interchanging music. . . ."

This poetry came to the attention of the editors of *Atlantic Monthly* in particular, and in the 1850s she was a regular contributor to the pages of that magazine.

She was now a grown woman, a small person with regular features, clear skin, and flashing brown eyes, her hair loose and almost silver in color it was such pure blonde. She and her sister, Sarah, were the most sought-after women of their set.

But the great causes stirred her more than the attentions of young men, and her success in poetry brought her to other attempts in the arts.

In the 1850s one woman in Watertown was already achieving much. She was Harriet Goodhue Hosmer. Her sculptures were exhibited in all the major cities, and particularly in Boston and New York, where she became quite celebrated. Taking a cue, Anne Whitney began to make an attempt at art.

One day she sat idly with her pencil, drawing. She traced out the

lines of an overturned flower pot, and the drawing somehow snapped to life.

Her sister, Sarah, came to look.

"I have done it," crowed Anne. "I always knew I could."

So she turned to fine arts and particularly to sculpture. Her first efforts were portrait busts of her father and mother. They were so successful, with so much style and faithful representation of character, that her father encouraged her to continue and offered to finance a new round of education for her if she wished.

Here was an indication of the intellectural level of the Whitney family, for there were only a handful of sculptors in all New England at that moment, male or female.

Anne was a very lucky young woman. Her father's money, and later her brother's, made it unnecessary for her to worry about such mundane matters as setting the dinner table. The family lived together in Nathaniel's big house, and servant girls took care of the problems of washing and ironing and cleaning. All Anne had to do was study and perfect her arts. And she did.

She became a friend of the celebrated New England intellectual, Fredrika Bremer, who spoke loudly of Anne's charms and abilities. She drew strength from such praise and worked harder than ever at poetry and sculpture. In 1859 she published a slim volume of her current poetry. Her earlier work was confined to the pages of the magazines and literary pages of the newspapers. "Sonnets to Beauty" and "Night" particularly caught public attention. There was a poem "To Camille" and "Hymn of the Sea" and "Last Dream." They were romantic poems for this romantic age of crinolines and hoop skirts, just on the brink of the great Civil War that was to divide the nation.

That edition of Anne's poems sold fairly quickly. It was out of print by 1861, and there was some demand by friends and admirers that it be brought into a new printing. But by the time the family was considering it seriously, the war had broken out, and Anne and the rest of the family had many problems on their minds.

Anne Whitney was ardent in the church, and in Abolition, and that led to the movement against strong drink. Naturally she was feminist and an energetic agitator for women's rights. But what was more important than agitation—which many a girl could do and would—was Anne Whitney's proving that she could face the world on its terms and compete with men.

Poetry—that was one thing. Where she began to shine was in her sculpture. For a time before the war she studied anatomy under the well-known expert Dr. William Rimmer. That in itself was a blusher—a young woman studying the anatomy of male and female forms. In the

saloons and clubs of Boston gray-haired men shook their heads and wondered what would be coming next.

The life of the sculptor, and particularly the lady sculptor, in Watertown was not easy. There were no texts in America, and no teachers available. The art was then, as always, an expression of inner genius, but most sculptors since Leonardo's day have had the advantage of someone's teaching in the techniques. Anne had to scour the libraries and bookstalls for the meager information available. For the most part, in the beginning, she was self-taught. True, there was Harriet Goodhue Hosmer, but their contact was confined to pleasantries and the smallest bit of encouragement by the older woman.

Soon Anne was attempting the big classical works like those she had seen in visits to the various museums in Boston and New York. She did a statue of Lady Godiva—a daring idea for the day—with Godiva chastely clothed, but preparing for her historic ride by unclasping the wedded eagles of her belt. "Full of purity and purpose," said a critic. And—much more important—a rich private collector of the day bought the piece for his salon.

She brought forth her feelings about slavery and her artistic ambitions in a colossal figure of a recumbent black woman titled simply "Africa." Into it went all the pain and beauty and humanity she saw in the Negro cause. The big figure was the despair of the movers—it went from Watertown to Boston for exhibit and then was taken down to New York, where it was even more wildly hailed by the critics. "And Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" was the legend around the base. Anne's art was serving her view of humanity and its needs—it was the political art of the day. "When you saw it," said a dear friend, "you could think only of Michelangelo."

If that praise was fulsome, still there was no questioning Anne Whitney's talent or the strong impression her works made on viewers of the sculptures.

Anne suffered a political relapse for a time. She stepped from strong words about life into the romanticism that many said was more the realm of women. She executed any number of romantic works, best of which was "Lotus Eater," showing her contempt for the lazy, leisured society she saw—a beautiful male youth figure, in the manner of Tennyson's poem. This work was followed by a bas-relief of Chaucer's head, a group of horses heads, and various portrait busts—all very conservative, all very proper.

Anne was growing restless. There was no way she felt that she could learn more on the American shore. She proposed to her father that she go abroad for a time.

Alone? How shameless could a woman be?

But no, not alone. She would go with her artist friend Adeline Manning, and they would chaperone each other through the fleshpots of the European capitals. There really was no other way, she explained to her family, for her to achieve the greatness that she was certain could be hers.

So she went to Paris, and then to Munich and Florence, and finally to Rome, where she was to spend most of the next five years. Here she worked with various sculptors and visited the great art centers and studied the works of Michelangelo, and Leonardo and the other greats of the Renaissance and later years. Out of this came a resurgence of her feeling against the ignominies heaped upon the black people, and she did a heroic statue of Toussaint L'Ouverture, the black Emperor of Haiti, sitting in his gloomy dungeon. On the floor he had traced the legend *Dieu se Charge*—and face and figure gave the stark look of the man who was indeed dragged to destiny by the hand of God.

Anne Whitney's personal life in these five years was her own secret; back in Boston it was enough to know that she was traveling about the European continent really unescorted. Nothing could be more bohemian, nothing could be more suspect.

Yet Anne Whitney's genius made fans of the critics. Her work was hailed in Europe, too, as much as any American could be hailed by a European society that was determined not to be impressed by the gawky youngsters from across the Atlantic. She came home at the end of the five years with a few works, principal among them a statue, "Roma," a figure of an old woman clad in tattered robes that were once luxurious, a symbol of Rome's loss of her greatness, sitting on the capital of an overturned Corinthian column, holding a penny between her fingers—a penny, the badge of the licensed beggar of Rome. There it was: Lo how the mighty are fallen. Those hands that had once wrested fortunes from the world now toying with a penny. For a modern viewer it might be a little histrionic, but this was the fashion of the day. Anne Whitney was a worker in the romantic school.

Home again she exhibited "Chaldean Astronomer," a bent figure searching the mystery of the stars—more romanticism. But her techniques were much improved; her knowledge of materials and methods had grown far more complete; she had absorbed from the artists of Rome and Florence; she had asked intelligent questions; she had observed and learned. Gossips might talk about her behind their hands, but her mother and father were pleased with the result of their expensive investment.

Anne Whitney's reputation was made by that long European sojourn. If she had studied in Europe, she *must* be good, was the

reaction, for as Paris was the center of painting of the day, so Rome was the center of sculpture.

Soon Anne Whitney had as many commissions as she could manage to perform. She did a portrait bust of President Walker of Harvard, and another of President Stearns of Amherst College. She sculpted William Lloyd Garrison, the abolitionist. She did a bust of Keats, and a replica was sent to the parish church of Hampstead, England.

The state of Massachusetts commissioned Anne Whitney to do a bronze statue of Samuel Adams for the square in Boston that bears his name. Soon it became a dual operation, bronze for Boston and a marble replica for the rotunda of the national Capitol in Washington. But Anne Whitney did not feel that she could get locally the proper expertise and materials for her bronze casting, or the kind of marble she wished for the Capitol. It was too important to allow for any mistake. So she left again for Europe, to do her work in Italy. She did it there, and both statues were sent home to add to her growing reputation.

Instead of going back to the United States, Anne Whitney went to Paris, where she spent another year. She sculpted while her close friend Adeline Manning painted. From this period came three important and successful works: a head of a sleeping woman, a faun, and a bust of Adeline Manning.

Anne had her troubles as an artist. When she competed with other artists for the commission to do a sculpture of Charles Sumner, she had the commission "in the bag," they said, until someone discovered that the winning artist was a woman. Then there was trouble. The result was that she never again competed with others for a commission; she would not deny that she was a woman and she would not accept the ignominy of failure because of it.

She did a statue of Harriet Martineau, the famous female emancipator, a sitting figure, for Wellesley college. It was the occasion for a celebration; the statue was actually unveiled in Old South Church and Wendell Phillips made a speech, giving credit both to Martineau and to Whitney for their work.

She did a study of Leif Ericsson. The unveiling marked an anniversary of Scandinavians in New England, and was the occasion for celebration in Faneuil Hall. And this heroic figure (Ericsson standing on the prow of his ship, shielding his eyes and looking out over the land he has discovered) and busts of Frances Willard, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Lucy Stone were sent to the Columbian Exposition.

In the 1870s Anne Whitney came into her own, and thereafter she achieved some of the acclaim she deserved, although she never did

become as famous as Sculptor Hosmer, her hometown rival—or perhaps the word should be "notorious." Hosmer was a much more vigorous figure, truly scandalous, running about Rome in men's costume, riding astride and chasing to hounds with the men, and generally doing precisely as she pleased. Anne Whitney was far more gentle and genteel. She was not as much interested in men as she was in her friendship with Adeline Manning, and that made her less fascinating to men than the sensuous Hosmer.

In the 1870s and 1880s Anne Whitney's work surpassed any personal publicity considerations, and she was known on her merit. The commissions were ceaseless, not that she needed them, for while Hosmer's father lost his money and that artist was forced to sell her saddle horse and then support herself in Rome, Anne Whitney's family continued to enjoy wealth and prestige.

For years Anne lived at home, sharing her apartments with her sister, Sarah, and Adeline Manning. Her father lived to be ninety-one, her mother to be a hundred and one years old. When her mother died, Anne Whitney decided to leave Watertown and all it had meant to her over the years. It was a wrench. Her brother had built a handsome studio for her where she could accomplish any work she wished. But the memories of the family were too strong, so while she kept using the studio from time to time for certain works, she moved with her sister and her friend to a house in Mount Vernon Street in Boston, overlooking the old city, with her spacious studio on the top floor.

She lived there for several years, then moved to the Charlesgate, an apartment house overlooking the Charles River, to a duplex with a penthouse. There she worked and held a salon, and there in evenings the luminous figures of the New England literary and artistic world could be found.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Anne Whitney was fascinated by radical political movements, and soon she gave her heart to the Socialist International. She was not so convinced at first of the need for revolution as she was of the need to move out into the streets with slogans and pamphlets, but her sympathies were there, and in her salon she talked the socialist talk of the day when this was the most radical of all philosophies. She and Adeline Manning had a half-dozen causes, women's suffrage being one of their most active. They had pamphlets printed and began to distribute them on the streets—two pleasant little old ladies out in their cloaks on the cold corners giving away literature for women's rights.

They lived well. They went to the opera; they dined where they pleased. They were not slaves to convention; they dressed in splendor, but in a very mannish fashion. Anne Whitney owned a farm in the

White Mountains of New Hampshire and they went there for summers each year, until Adeline Manning died. Then the memories were too poignant and Anne refused to go back to the farm. Instead, for diversion she took a cottage on the estate of her cousin, Charles A. Stone, in Plymouth, and she summered there for the last few years of her life.

She was a vigorous old lady. In her nineties she still walked a mile or two a day without a cane, and she read the newspapers owlishly, often with sharp comment. And she was fortunate, for after Adeline died she found a new friend and companion in an old acquaintance, Olive Dargan, a poetess Anne had known for years. They spent much time together and kept one another from becoming lonely.

But time ran out, even as the world she knew was ravaged by a new war, in 1914. Paris was nearly overrun, the Paris of her youth. These shocks were the talk of her salon and the genteel circles she frequented. Her world of decency and friendship was overwhelmed and destroyed in those days of 1914, and she seemed to sense it, for on January 15, 1915, Anne Whitney died in her Beacon Hill studio in Boston, surrounded by her own work and sketches, what she called "the beings of my mind." She was given a fine funeral, and the newspapers accorded her the signal honor of society. The passing of nearly any other woman would have been virtually unnoticed by the publicists of the day, but such was Anne Whitney's renown that she was ushered out of the world by long obituaries. Thus even at the end Anne Whitney struck a blow for women's liberation.

6/ The Woman Who Reached for the Stars

Whitneys, it seemed, were involved with much that was significant in America during the nineteenth century. Not the least of the clan was a woman important in American life and letters, and as the history of women's accomplishment is reevaluated, she will become of more importance. She was Mary Watson Whitney, and she was directly descended from John Whitney of England and Watertown.

Mary Watson Whitney was born in Waltham, Massachusetts, on September 11, 1847, and she attended the public schools through the high school level. She was a particularly fine student, with a flair for mathematics unusual in girls in the Waltham schools, and she came to the attention of her teachers as one who could profit from higher education. There seemed little hope of it, for no college admitted women in the 1860s when she was searching about for a future. Louis Agassiz's seminary in Cambridge was not open to her.

But Mary learned of a new experiment in female education to be started in the fall of 1865 at Poughkeepsie on the Hudson River—Vassar College.

Matthew Vassar was a wealthy Poughkeepsie brewer who had made his riches by 1845 and then began to travel in Europe. There he was wondering what he should do with the fortune he had accumulated. Should he put up an insane asylum? He thought about it. But no, he decided to spend money on the education of young women instead.

That idea was suggested to Vassar by Lydia Booth, his niece. He bought an old mansion on the northern edge of town, a place that had once belonged to one of the Livingston family. Louis Philippe had slept here when that heir to the throne of France was in exile in America. The educational institute was called Cottage Hill Seminary.

In the years that followed, Vassar's niece urged him to enlarge and expand, and he listened half absently, for he was busy with the estate in Poughkeepsie. In the spring of 1855, Professor M.P. Jewett took over Cottage Hill Seminary, and he continued to persuade Vassar to start a college for young women, which would be to them what

Harvard, Yale, and the College of William and Mary were to young men.

Jewett was the right man in the right place at the right time. Vassar had no children. His two nephews were his partners; they, too, were childless. The Vassar brewery was sending up a thick cloud of black smoke every day of the week, all day long, to meet the needs of the Hudson Valley. The profits were immense. So in 1860 Vassar said yes and set to work to secure a charter from the New York legislature. M.P. Jewett became the president of the college.

The college was built two miles east of Poughkeepsie Courthouse, about the same distance from the Hudson, in tolling hills where old man Vassar had walked as a child to look at the steeples of the city's churches. The buildings were erected on a farm that had once been the Dutchess County Race Course.

First of all, President Jewett was sent abroad to England to study the most up-to-date English methods of educating young women, and to France on the same errand, then to Berlin, Vienna, Dresden, Munich, Rome, and Florence. He came home to report that none of the foreign systems were suitable for female education in a great republic, and he devised a system of his own.

Meanwhile, early in 1865, after old Brewer Vassar had raised the first spadeful of dirt, the building was begun. Next to it was erected an Astronomical Observatory, which was to become the most important place in the life of Mary Watson Whitney within the next few months.

In June the building was finished, and Dr. Jewett reported that the college would be ready to take its first class in the fall. When the news reached Waltham, eighteen-year-old Mary persuaded her father to take her to Poughkeepsie and at least look the place over. She was determined to go on to college.

Samuel Buttrick Whitney was not a tremendously wealthy man, but he was interested in his daughter's welfare, and he agreed to accompany her on the trip. They went to Poughkeepsie that spring, just as Dr. Jewett and the trustees agreed to disagree, and John H. Raymond was appointed president of the college.

The line-up of professors included many who possessed the prized master of arts degree. (There were no Ph.D's around in those days.) The curriculum was solid and extensive: philosophy, modern languages, mathematics, chemistry, physics (natural philosophy), natural history, music, classics. Henry von Ingen, an artist of some note, taught drawing and painting; Maria Mitchell was professor of astronomy and director of the observatory. In the faculty, the ladies outnumbered the gentlemen by more than two to one, and of them all Maria Mitchell was the most distinguished. She was a square-faced,

mannish woman of forty-seven years, who affected a hat something like a fez, short hair frizzing around her head, and wore stern, white shirtwaists beneath voluminous black or gray suitlike dresses. She had clear piercing eyes, a straight nose, a jaw like Teddy Roosevelt's, and a strong mind and a ready tongue. She had been born in 1818 on Nantucket Island, where her father taught school and worked for the United States Coast Survey. That did not pay very well, so he left and became cashier of the Pacific Bank. Maria was educated largely by a famous Nantucket teacher named Cyrus Pierce, who was an expert in mathematics. Maria Mitchell exhausted Nantucket's formal educational opportunities by the time she was eighteen, and then was at a loss for further schooling. There were no women's colleges on Nantucket. But there was the Nantucket Atheneum, the island library, and the job of librarian fell vacant. Maria took it and soon began teaching herself languages and classics. She learned Latin by herself.

Since Nantucket was a seafaring place, and captains came and went from far lands, the library was extremely well stocked with scientific, mathematical, and astronomical books. So Maria Mitchell taught herself astronomy and other sciences. Her father was an astronomer and helped her study. He maintained an observatory at the house, and she spent her nights watching the stars with her father. One October evening in 1847 Maria Mitchell discovered a new comet. Her father, by now a prominent astronomer, was also an overseer of Harvard College. He informed President Edward Everett of the discovery—and Maria's reputation was made secure. The King of Denmark awarded medals to people who discovered comets, and Maria received one. She was given a new telescope as well. She was appointed computer for the Nautical Almanac, and that led her to the academic career that brought her to Vassar in 1865. Self-educated to a large extent, though much encouraged by her father, she had made herself a scientist of international reputation. She went to England and visited Sir John Herschel, and later corresponded with him. Sir John Airy, the Royal Astronomer of England, invited her to tea. She traveled to Paris and met Leverrier; in Germany she was able to talk to Humboldt at length. In Rome the officials of the Vatican invited her to their observatory. No other woman had ever been allowed inside.

If there was a woman in America at that time whose head was above the crowd, it was Maria Mitchell. She was easily the most distinguished person at the college, although admittedly her specialty was not every young girl's idea of education. But the maintenance of an observatory gave the college a certain distinction.

So in September 1865, Mary Watson Whitney came to Vassar along with 299 other young women in crinolines and satins. They had

special costumes for riding, for strolling, and for croquet playing. They rode under Leopold von Seldeneck, a Prussian cavalryman who had come to America during the Civil War and fought with the Union Army. They strolled in little groups, and they played croquet under the eye of Miss Elizabeth M. Powell, an amazon of a woman who ordered them into bloomers to take calisthenics.

First Mary was examined in Latin, French, and algebra. She did better than most of the girls. The authorities of Vassar were (secretly) badly shaken when they examined the results of the testing of their first class. Ragged—very ragged indeed! And why not? There were virtually no standards of female education in 1865, and the girl was lucky who managed to progress beyond the maidenly arts. Some of the girls were only fifteen years old. Some were twenty-four. Mary passed through the gates, and her father deposited her in the great hall of the building that was made to represent the edifice in the Tuileries. She was assigned a room with another girl. They had a parlor for study and relaxation. She was enjoined to obey the rules and take two baths a week and send her clothing to the laundry regularly.

Life was confusing for Mary Watson Whitney in the first days at Vassar. The retesting on arrival proved that the academic condition of the girls was even worse than President Raymond had believed. Maria Mitchell was appalled at what she had to work with and delivered her opinions in no uncertain terms. The first thing that had to be done was to sort the girls out and get them all started studying. This process took three full weeks, and during that time the professors conducted concerts and lectures. While the girls waited and the teachers hastily revamped their teaching schedules, Mary Watson Whitney and her friends went to Professor Wiebe's classical concerts, and to Professor Tenney's lectures on sea anemones and coral.

The girls were bemused by the atmosphere in those three weeks. It was a picnic! No classes, no studies, no teachers' stern looks. The delay in education did serve one useful purpose: by the time the classes began the girls had sorted themselves out, made friends, and acquired a few enemies.

Mary Watson Whitney spent those early days learning. She had done well enough in her examinations, and she knew it, but she still had to wait. She came down to breakfast in the morning, to the huge dining hall, and approached one of the tables. Hannah Lyman, the lady principal, presided over the head table, and at her right sat Maria Mitchell, and her left Dr. Alida C. Avery, the resident physician. To get to her table, Mary Watson had to pass by the head table and beneath the scrutiny of the three faculty women, who examined every girl closely to see if her face was washed, and her hair combed, and her

hands clean. Then the girls ate boiled eggs and toast and tea, fourteen girls at every table.

When the faculty had finished sorting out the girls, Mary Watson Whitney found herself placed in the sophomore class, the class of 1868. There was not a one who could qualify for the senior class, and only a handful had enough learning to make the junior class. Most were rank freshwomen, and the most heavily occupied sections were really high school or remedial classes.

Maria Mitchell took a look at the school and went home to tell to her father at the observatory (where they also lived) that she had virtually nothing with which to work. She had been walking about, talking to the girls, and they were a nice lot, certainly, and it was a noble experiment, absolutely, but what scientific education! The public schools and ladies' seminaries were a disgrace.

Every girl who hoped to use the astronomical observatory was personally interviewed by Maria Mitchell. One by one the girls tramped over the footpath to the big building with the dome on it and answered the questions put to them. Mary Watson passed. She was one of fifteen girls in that first year who were allowed within the precincts of the telescope, except on "general occasions." Maria was tough, but she was not impossible; she liked showing off the heavens, and from time to time she would invite groups of girls to come over for an evening, and would give them, extracurricularly, an elementary lesson in astronomy. But Mary Watson was one of the chosen few—she was to become involved in the astronomical work of the college.

The intellectual world of America approved of Vassar, and Maria Mitchell, with her international connections, gave the place a bit of sophistication. She was a friend of Julia Ward Howe—and nearly every other prominent female in American life. Most of these women came to visit Maria in the big apartment in the observatory and stay a few days to observe the experiment. So Mary Whitney got to know important people at an early age.

Other important persons came to Vassar: Professor Noah Porter of Yale, Henry Ward Beecher, who lectured that very first autumn.

The disciplinary system was strict. The girls got up at 6:00 and went to morning prayers at 6:45. Breakfast was at seven, under the watchful eyes of at least one of the triumvirate at the head table, and afterward the girls went back to their rooms to clean and meditate until study and recitations began at 9:00. Then came dinner and forty minutes of free time, afternoon study and recitation until 5:45, supper at 6:00, and evening prayers at 6:30, after which the girls were supposed to be quiet, writing letters or thinking until 8:00, when they had another hour and forty minutes for study, then lights out at 10:00.

But the lights-out theory was made difficult by every possible girlish machination. The rooms were lit with gas, and the girls would run tubes to the gas and, in the most dangerous fashion, set up lights under umbrellas and blankets. They would stay there for hours—particularly on weekends. They would do anything to break that particular rule. It was a point of honor. So the disciplinarians were busy, scolding and taking away privileges and giving out extra chores.

The girls observed all the various holidays, and the college faculty tried to help them out with entertainments, receptions, and lectures in the evening. The big celebration of that first year came in the spring, on the seventy-fourth birthday of old Matthew Vassar, the founder of the college. Mary Watson and the other girls lined up and trouped down the broad stairs of the dormitory to the college parlors at five o'clock on the evening of April 29, 1866. President Raymond picked Vassar up, and when they arrived, there were the girls, in two columns on each side of the long driveway.

And then there were songs and smiles and laughter and a special ceremony at the chapel. The singing was followed by recitations showing woman's importance in the world—the girls wanted Vassar to know that they understood what a grand venture he had undertaken in furthering female education. Then an address to the founder:

Beloved and honored sire!
Welcome with flowers. . . .

Thus it went right up to ten o'clock sharp, when Principal Lyman began scouting up and down the halls of Vassar to be sure the students were all tucked safely in their beds.

Soon Mary Watson Whitney was president of the math club, the croquet club, the chess club. She contributed to the *Vassariana*, as they called the student paper in the early years. On the second anniversary of the founding of Vassar, she was completely involved in the ceremonies. It was a tremendous affair—as big as the Founders' Day celebration. They unveiled a marble bust of Mr. Vassar, which went into the college parlor. The girls gave a drama, in which the hero was The Genius of Progress, and Mary Watson gave the eulogy.

The second year the literary magazine revealed the girls' opinions: "This modern system of female education has grown out of the miserable philosophic dogma of the mental equality of the sexes, the offspring of the combined weakness of the weaker sex and the greater weakness of the stronger sex. Woman is *not* the equal of man. She is immeasurably his superior. . . . The ladies should be the principals and the gentlemen the assistants. The proper educator of woman is

woman. Vassar Female College is the sphere of Venus and no Jupiter has any business there. . . .''

Thus was Mary Watson Whitney fitted to go out into the world of men.

She did go out, in 1868, with honors in that second graduating class. Then what? There was really nothing for her to do but go home. Her speciality, astronomy, was not going to get her employment at Yale or Harvard or any observatory at all. A woman might be brought in, but only as an amanuensis or an assistant. And with Mary Whitney's ability and all she had learned in those two years from Maria Mitchell, she was not going to give in that easily.

Instead she remained at home and studied for the master of arts degree that Vassar gave *in absentia.* Maria Mitchell helped, and soon Mary Whitney had an invitation from the mathematician Benjamin Pierce to attend his lecture course at Harvard University. She went. Later she went on to Zurich, to study mathematics and visit friends of Maria Mitchell's in Europe.

By 1870 Maria Mitchell's workload had become so heavy that she called Mary Whitney on several occasions to come and stay at the observatory in Vassar and help her with experiments and observations. Professor Farrar, the mathematics man at Vassar, had supervised the building of the observatory. But immediately Maria and her father had begun making changes. Mary had helped build several astronomical instruments in the past, and she helped again. She was adept at work with clock and chronograph; she knew how to teach in the Equatorial Room, and she had moved the Dome around on its cast-iron track a thousand times.

The Great Equatorial Refractor—the principal telescope—was fourth largest in the United States when it was mounted. It was almost as fine an instrument as those used at Harvard and at Hamilton College and at the Dudley Observatory.

Here and at the Transit and Meridian Circle, with its own high-powered telescope, Maria Mitchell and Mary Whitney taught the girls of Vassar about the heavens. And when not teaching, they were engaged in the watching of stars and planets and lesser bodies, with regular observations that made up a valuable and noted body of work.

Late in the 1870s Maria Mitchell said she was feeling very old. She was, after all, in her sixties. Her father was dead, and it was lonely in the big observatory. She acknowledged that Mary Watson Whitney was the finest student she had ever taught and would make a first-rate assistant.

As the college was growing and prospering, the administration agreed that Maria Mitchell was to have an assistant, and in 1881 she

asked Mary to come and join her permanently. What she was doing, actually, was picking her successor.

So Mary Whitney came to Vassar to live. She got on well with Professor Mitchell, then and always.

They talked, they gabbled day and night, about everything under the sun—but mostly about what concerned women. The girls of Vassar were deep into women's suffrage in those years, but they were children compared to Maria and Mary. All those two would say in an argument was, "Well, and how is this going to affect women?"

One day Maria came storming into the observatory, her notebook in hand. President Raymond had just been going about the faculty, asking the members what they had published. (The imperative of publish or perish was rearing its ugly academic head even in the 1880s.) And the president had completely failed to ask Maria and Mary what they published. The fact was that they were publishing all the time. To be sure, their material was largely figures and calculations, and could not be read by a student of English literature with much coherence, but they were publishing. She and Mary were so angry at being left out of consideration that President Raymond had to apologize.

The two of them brought many a visitor to the college. True, most of them were Maria's friends in the beginning, but soon they took to the forthright woman who seemed almost a younger sister. Julia Ward Howe came to recite her "Battle Hymn of the Republic"—that was a special gesture to Maria Mitchell in behalf of the girls. Mostly, the visitors just remained in the observatory with the ladies, and they talked over problems of women's rights and women's futures.

Maria was a taskmistress, a perfectionist, but she taught Mary those same qualities.

If Mary had a fault, it was a certain head-in-the-clouds behavior that sometimes distressed her old companion. Mary left dishes undone and doors unshut and rooms untidied. She was even more wrapped up in women's affairs and the work of the observatory these years than was Maria.

Seven years after Mary Watson Whitney came to Vassar, Maria decided to retire. She was not well. One June evening they held the last of Professor Mitchell's Dome parties—an annual event that delighted the girls of her department. One night each spring had been set aside for the astronomy girls, and they all came trooping in to the Dome on the given evening.

No tracking of a star this evening—no motion of the telescope—but the merry glow of the gas jet and the clatter of cups and plates.

Amid the cake and the pastries and the punch, Maria told them that she had been feeling a general lassitude all spring, and she was going to leave. Mary Watson would be her replacement in the observatory.

It was a sad evening for the girls, because beneath the rough exterior and sharp corrective remark, was a soft-hearted woman—at least to other women. And all by this time had found her out. She had more friends among the girls than any other female faculty member.

Now she celebrated with a little doggerel verse about Mary, and they all drank toasts in non-alcoholic punch, and the party ended. Maria, as professor emerita, went home that spring to the house she had kept all these years in Lynn, Massachusetts. Mary Watson Whitney took over as professor of astronomy and chief of an observatory that had now taken its place in the ranks of the finest in America.

Mary Watson arranged it so that Maria might have a home at Vassar if she wished one, and the free use of the observatory for any work she desired to do. But Maria preferred to stay in Lynn and put up the telescope she had used before she went to Vassar.

Mary Whitney then set out to follow the path first trodden by Maria Mitchell. She found the going easier, for astronomers all over the world accepted the work of Vassar, and she began to publish more as the demand for such work grew stronger. She brought Caroline Furness, one of her own students, to help her.

They began a long series of projects which would lead to her publication of a hundred studies during the years that she remained as head of the observatory. She and Caroline Furness began to plot the positions of comets and asteroids, working with other observatories in other places. In 1905, she published a catalogue of the stars within one degree of the North Pole. She became friends with most of the prominent astronomers of the day. Professor Harold Jacoby worked with her often, but she had contacts with people as far away as Dr. Anders Donner of the observatory at Helsinki. She was elected a fellow of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science, and she was generally accorded the acclaim of her students. Faculty members who had known both said she was an even better teacher than her mentor, Maria, although she was not quite so fervent or loud in her support of women's rights. From Maria she had developed an interest in just about everything that went on around her, and she cultivated tastes in music and art at this excellent source. She became one of the most highly esteemed members of the Vassar faculty.

The research went on under her direction. Vassar, of course, was growing and changing all the time. In 1910 she suddenly fell ill, and decided she must retire from the work-a-day world. So she had her last

Dome party, too, and retired from daily work, although she continued as director of the observatory until 1912. She died in 1920, one of the most honored of American women of her day. Her career—the difficulties and the triumphs—is a very good reminder of how even a genius among women had to fight for survival in the days before women's liberation.

IV
The Adventurers

Among the Whitneys two figures stand out for very different reasons, sharing only one major attribute. They were William C. Whitney, of a Massachusetts branch, who followed the pattern of Eli and Josiah and went to Yale, and Harry Whitney, of the New Haven branch of the family, who never went further than preparatory school.

The shared attribute was a love of adventure, and it carried both men a long way, although in quite different directions.

ırtesy, Memorials of Eminent Yale Men

The first memorable Whitney was Eli, the inventor of both the cotton gin, which made the South's economy viable, and the modern assembly line, which produced weapons that brought about the destruction of the South.

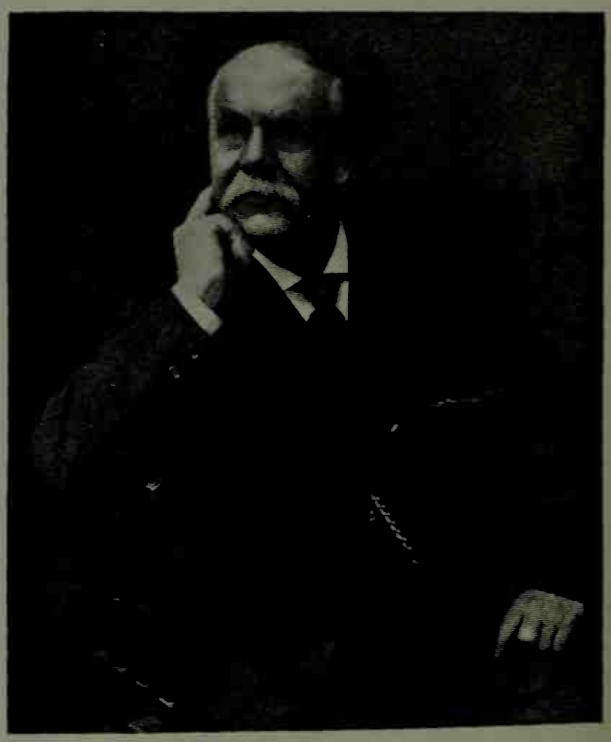
And here is one of Anne Whitney's celebrated works, notable for its simple line and powerful statement.

Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Courtesy, Vassar College Library

In this observatory at Vassar College, Mary Whitney and her mentor, Maria Mitchell (*left*), astounded a world that had considered astronomy a purely male pursuit.

Myron Whitney began his musical career as a church singer in Boston, but before he was finished, he had ascended the heights and was to be remembered as one of the finest bassos the world has yet produced.

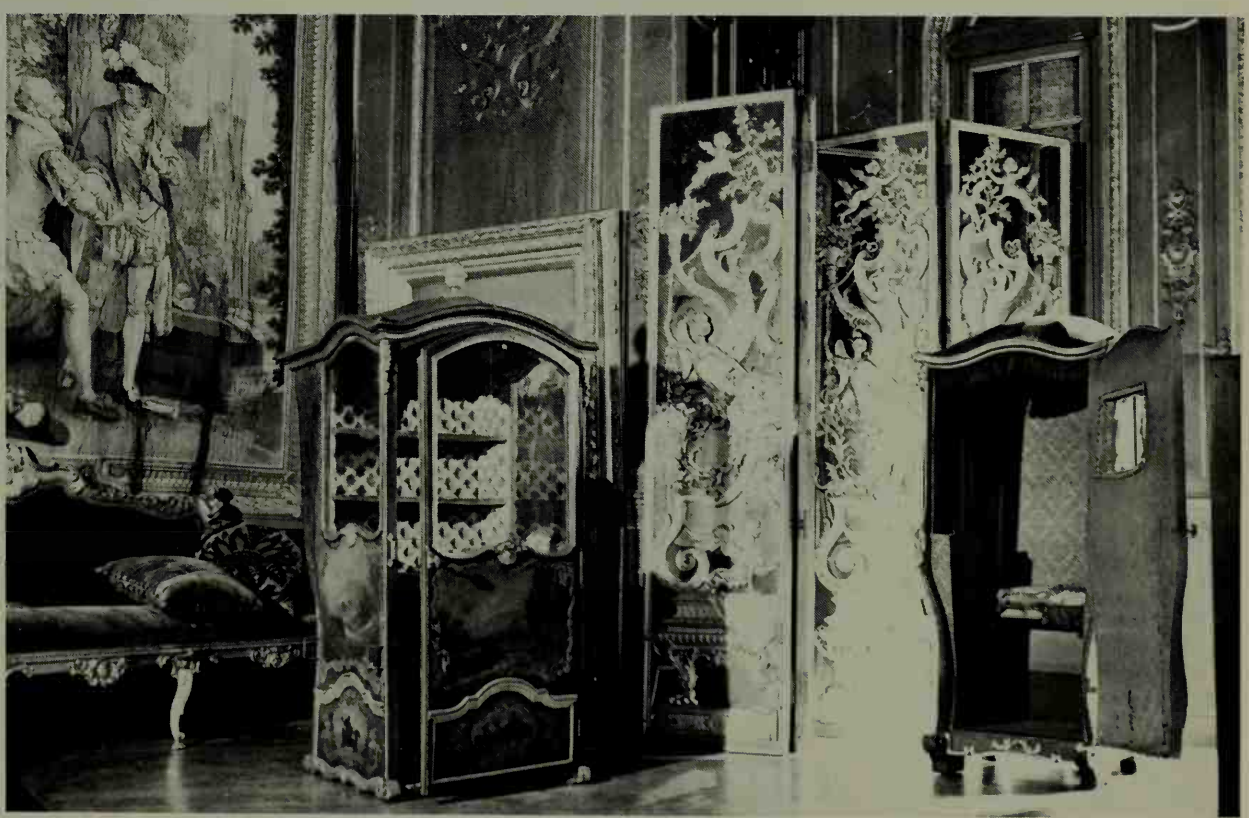


Courtesy, Vassar College Library

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

The ballroom of Will Whitney's palace was covered with this painting on canvas: Eros, nymphs and amors played among the clouds above, as New York's Four Hundred danced on the polished floor below.

When a Whitney built a mansion, as Will did, he liked to have nice things—such as this pair of 18th-century Chinese sedan chairs and the formidable four-fold screen.



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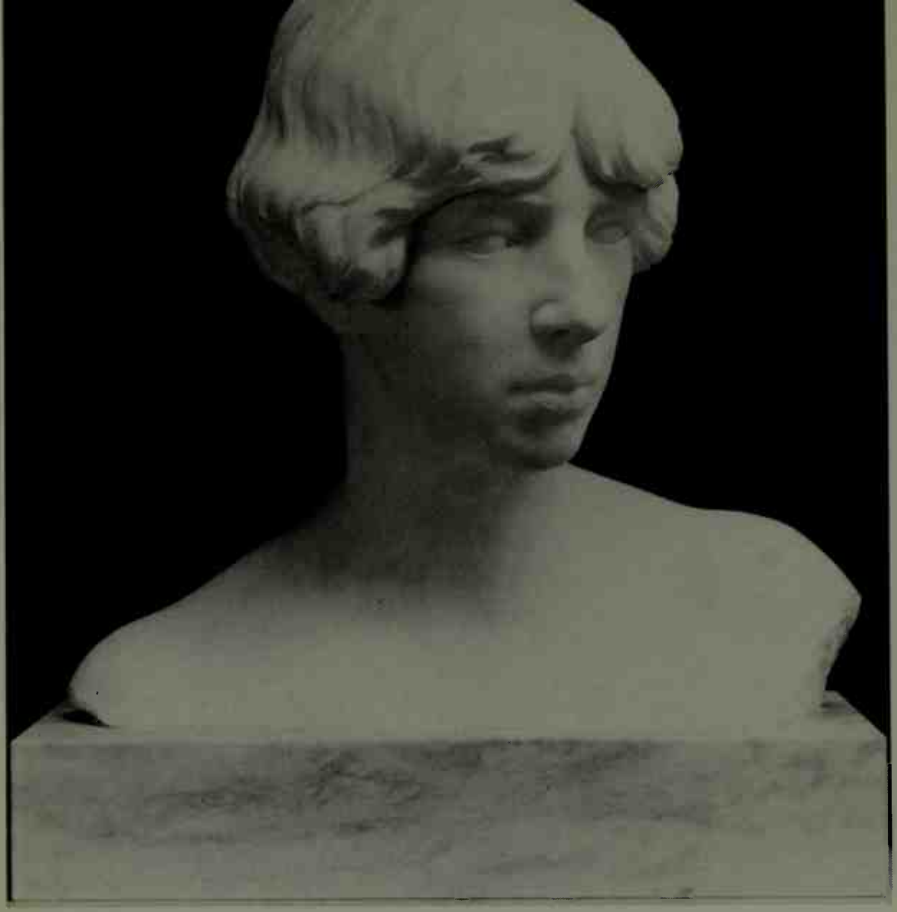


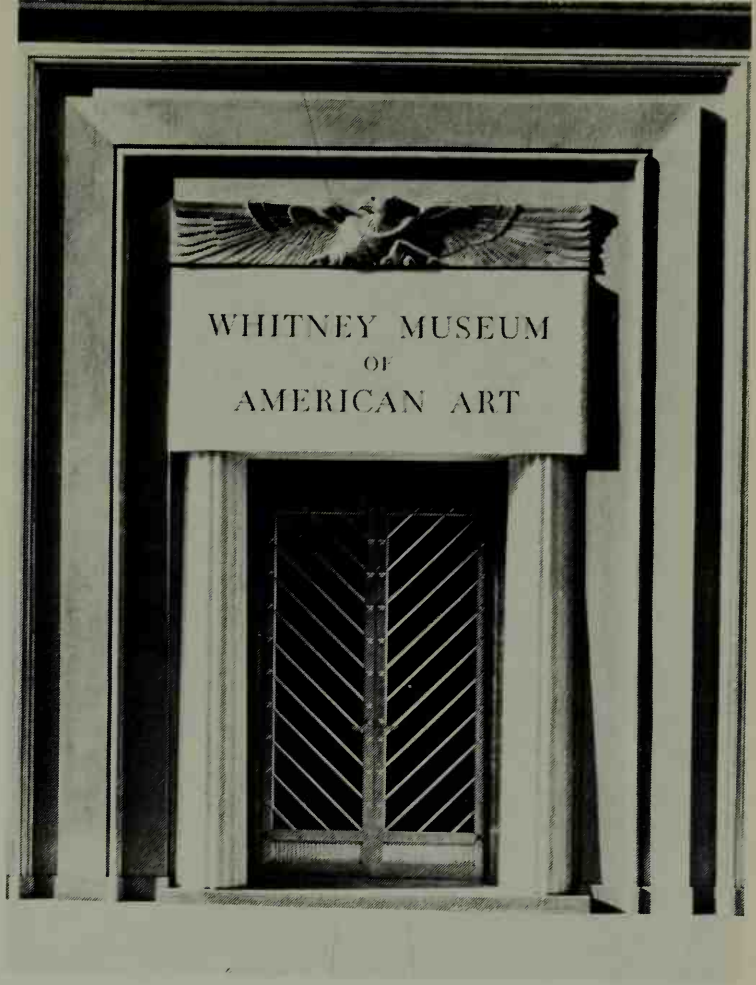
Courtesy, Whitney Museum of American Art

Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney came to be regarded seriously by students of modern art. Jo Davidson created this bust of her in 1917.

Here is Mrs. Whitney at work with her assistant in her New York studio in 1937.

Courtesy, Whitney Museum of American Art

The Whitney Museum of Modern Art in downtown New York City on Eighth Street for many years. Here is the entrance . . .



Courtesy, Whitney Museum of American Art

. . . and here is the lobby. The fountain is the work of Mrs. Whitney.

uftesy, Whitney Museum of American Art

Courtesy, Bettmann Archive

Mrs. Payne Whitney was not only a social leader but also a woman concerned with good works. Every year she gave a fair at the estate on Long Island to help out her community. Here she is with one of the grandchildren.

Harry Payne Whitney was a leader in finance, and so was his friend James R. Keene (*right*). But not every moment was devoted to worry. Sometimes they even got out their straw hats to show that they were relaxing.

Courtesy, Bettmann Archive

As a girl she was a beauty; and as she aged, Helen Hay Whitney showed the strong character that made her a leader in the arts and on the turf.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Not many people would recognize the svelte Gloria Vanderbilt as the little girl in the middle here. When Gloria's mother fell out with the family, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney was chosen by the court to be Gloria's guardian. The little girl on the left is Gloria's friend Louise Hutchinson.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

The Fifth Avenue mansions were torn down in the 1940s and 1950s to make way for scrapers. This big, airy place of Harry Payne Whitney's went in the war years—furnishings and all.

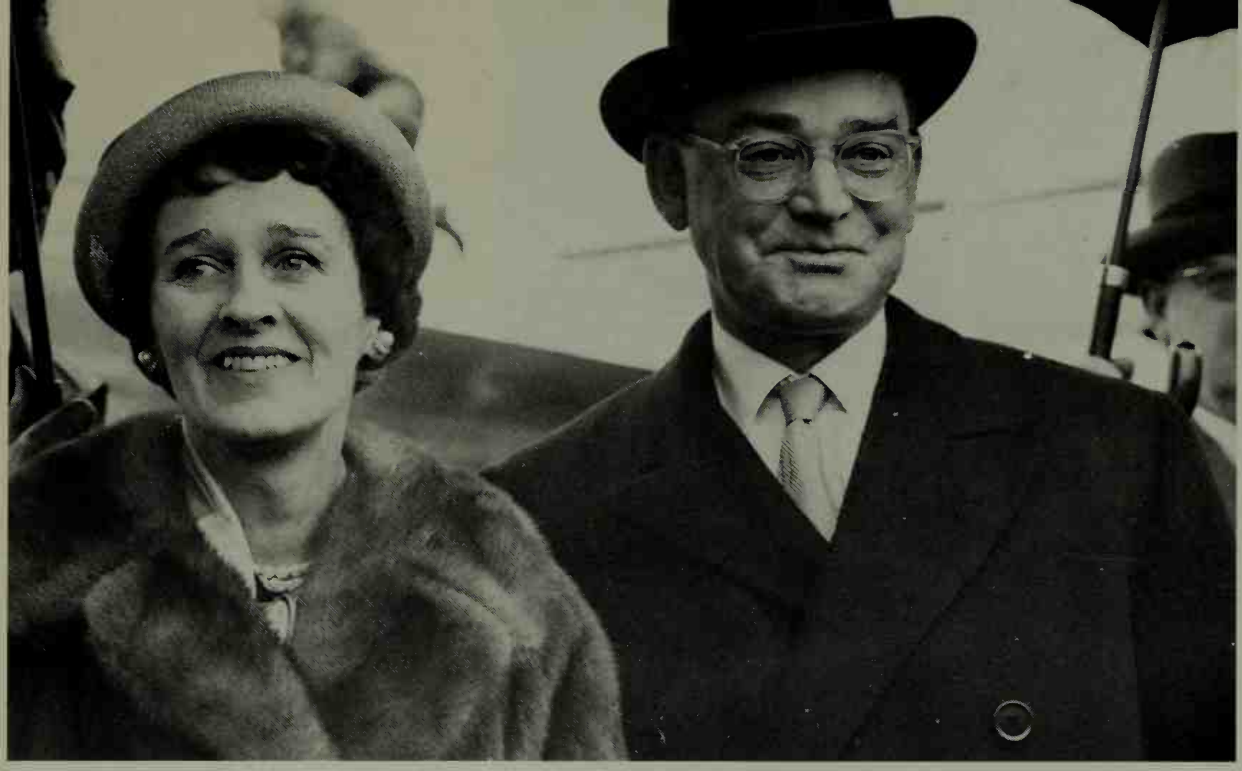
Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Like the other millionaires, the Whitneys went far and wide to buy up treasures of the world. This Empire mahogany bed fit very nicely in Harry Payne Whitney's Louis XVI bedroom.

A Whitney ballroom. They were built in the days when a proper millionaire practically never went any place "public," and a decent party was held in one of twenty or thirty rooms like this around New York.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos



Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Jock and Betsey Whitney went to London when Dwight Eisenhower became President. It took the money of a Whitney to keep up the sprawling complex of the American embassy and do the entertaining.

When Jock married for he first time, he bought this antebellum mansion in Virginia for his bride.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Just before this picture was taken, Jock was joking with Robert Benchley and some of his other young friends. He liked writers and the New York cognoscenti in his youth. It took a few years to train him in the ways of wealth.

Jock Whitney in London made a good ambassador at a time when ambassadors had very little to do except be pleasant to the natives. Here he is with Lady Astor.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

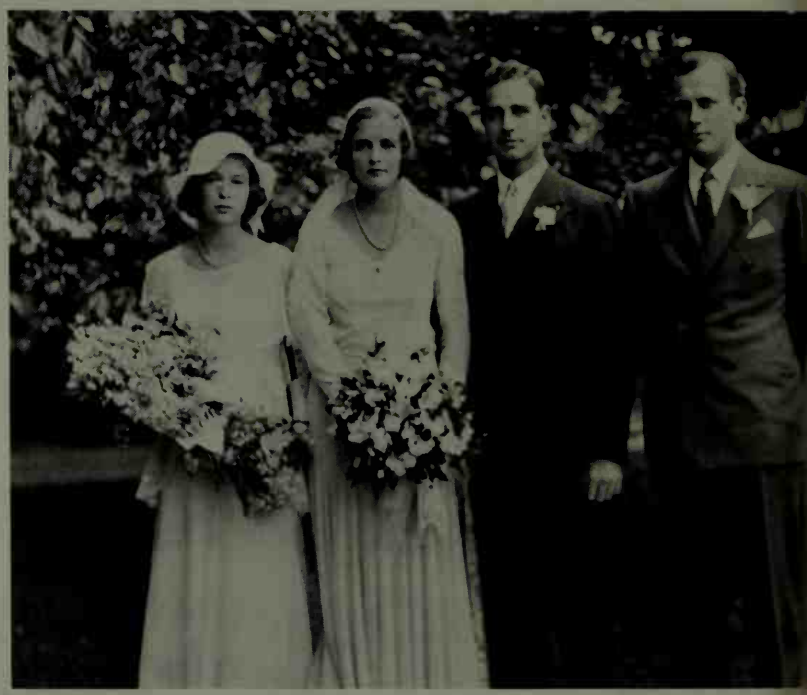
Jock joined the army in a special businessmen's enlistment group. But soon enough he was colonel, and that is how he fought his war until he was captured.

It was a historic but very sad day when Jock Whitney had to get up at a press conference in New York and announce the death of the New York *Herald Tribune*.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Sonny's first wife was Marie. She was vivacious and devoted to him and shared the difficulties of those first years in the mines. But then, as the rich had a habit of doing, they grew away from each other . . . and then she moved to Nevada to wait for her divorce.



Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Gwladys G. Hopkins became the second Mrs. C. V. Whitney.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

But even a third marriage did not work out for Sonny. In 1958 he married Mrs. Mary Hosford.

One of the pleasures of the very rich in the 20th century was still the hunt. Here C. V. leads out his dogs to make ready for a hare hunt on the estate at Westbury, Long Island.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

As a youngster, Sonny Whitney liked to travel in fast company. Here someone has posed him with actress Constance Bennett.

The Meadowbrook Steeplechase was always a big affair in the lives of Long Island's horsey set. Here the second Mrs. C. V. Whitney is shown with one of her husband's entries.

Courtesy, Bettmann Archive

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

C. V. Whitney had a feeling for public service that he inherited from old Will. He became the undersecretary of commerce in 1949.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

In 1967, the Whitneys were in the news again in a way that was not very pleasant. Three quarters of a million dollars' worth of jewels were stolen from the Saratoga house, where Sonny and his family spent a few months in the summertime.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

They called Sonny the "world's richest artist." He might not have been the best, but he attracted a lot of attention in Miami in 1966, when he gave a showing for the Edward R. Murrow memorial fund.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

You were supposed to dress up in fancy clothes for the Beaux Arts Ball, but Joan Whitney Payson did not go in for that kind of thing. Donald Stewart compromised.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

Here are the Payson daughters, who have come to visit Grandma Helen Hay Whitney at the estate at Greentree on Long Island.

Courtesy, Wide World Ph

Joan Whitney Payson bought the New York Mets baseball team and rooted them on to victory. On this night at Shea stadium, Yogi Berra and the boys beat the Pittsburgh Pirates for her.

Courtesy, Wide World Photos

After Joan died in 1975, her daughter Mrs. Vincent de Roulet was elected president of the Mets. The Whitney tradition went on.

7/ The Man Who Elected a President

Descendants of old John Whitney of England did themselves proud in the revolution against Britain. When the siege of Boston began, the lieutenant colonel of one of the Massachusetts regiments was Josiah Whitney, late of Harvard and he was no Johnny-come-lately soldier. He had fought against the Frenchmen and the Indians twenty years earlier in the victorious battle at Lake George.

This Josiah was promoted to colonel and put in charge of the regiment that defended Boston Harbor against the Redcoats. (He had a son, Josiah, who also served as an officer.) Josiah of Harvard became a general before 1783. After the war he went to the legislature, representing Harvard on the General Court, and in 1788 he was a delegate to the Massachusetts convention to ratify the Constitution. (He opposed ratification because he was so instructed by his constituents.) Then he was a prominent Antifederalist, opposed to Washington and Hamilton, and an adherent of Thomas Jefferson, Eli's friend.

Three generations later there came James Scollay Whitney, who married a Bradford and became a general in the militia. James moved his family to Conway in the Deerfield hills north of Mount Holyoke. He built a big two-story house and ran a general store in the front of it. He erected a cotton mill (how pervasive was Eli's invention!). On July 5, 1841, James's third child was born, and they named the boy William Collins Whitney. He was to become one of the most successful and effective statesmen and politicians in America; he was to elect a President and to turn down for himself a nomination for the Presidency that he might have won. He was to rebuild the American Navy and to strengthen the American political system by his efforts. He was also to marry one of the richest women in the country and to become one of its wealthiest men—a fortuitous set of circumstances that puts this Whitney line among the richest American families even down unto the present generation.

Young William learned politics early. His father, the general, was a Sumner man by mistake. That is, the elder Whitney opposed

Sumner's "agitation" of the slavery problem, and then Sumner assured him personally that he really did not care about slavery but was interested in foreign affairs. General Whitney was gulled—and being fooled, he cast the vote in the legislature that decided that one of the worst enemies ever to face the South would go to the Senate from Massachusetts. How the general lived to rue that day! But it was an honest mistake. Sumner was as guileful as any politician that ever lived, and the general's constituents apparently forgave him, because they elected him sheriff of Franklin County in 1851.

William C. Whitney grew up in a family of three boys and three girls, a devout Congregationalist family, and well to do. The sheriff organized the Conway Bank in 1854, and established the Conway Mutual Fire Insurance Company a little later. It was a gold mine. Apparently nothing ever burned down in Conway, though the God-fearing merchants expected conflagration at any moment.

William was so doleful a child that his siblings called him Deacon. His favorite activity in good weather was to wander out to the bank of the south river, cast himself down beneath the elms, and ponder the state of the world and his soul. Wealth made leisure, and he managed considerable pondering in a relatively few years. Out of all this came maxims and little character reminders which he wrote down in a small notebook, e.g.:

"April 26, 1856. —Four things come not back—the spoken word—the past life—the sped arrow—the neglected opportunity."

And on another day:

"God helps the man who helps himself."

If these homilies were not notable for their brilliance or originality, neither were they worse than most of the copybook philosophy of the day in backwater Massachusetts.

Early in 1854 the family's whole ambience changed completely, and oddly enough the reason was largely because of Eli Whitney's Irvine case and the later running battle between Samuel Colt and Eli Whitney, Jr., over arms production. To heal the sore this quarrel had brought to the arms industry, Congress in 1854 decided that a civilian must be appointed to head the National Armory at Springfield. Thus was General Whitney thrust into national politics, for his generalship was in the militia and he was really a civilian politician, one of the star performers the previous year at the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention.

With a grand celebration of departure, and presenting little Conway with parting gifts—the town with its first fire engine and the Congregational church with a pipe organ—the Whitneys left Conway forever.

William and his brother Henry went to school in Springfield for two years, and then were sent off to the Williston Seminary in Easthampton. Once again one sees how intertwined were the affairs of all these Whitney cousins: Williston Seminary was founded by Samuel Williston, who was the maternal uncle of Josiah Whitney, the geologist—and here was a new group of Whitneys to fall under that influence.

At Williston, Will Whitney took the usual classical courses—none of that Round Hill "cosmopolitanism," but good doses of Euclid and Homer and Virgil and Xenophon, algebra and ancient geography and a heavy emphasis on Bible study, which was taught by the headmaster himself.

William was more than adequate—so they said—in his studies, but he upset the headmaster because he was far more interested in Washington politics than was natural for a boy of his age. The mooning under the elms had been a prelude. There was nothing Will liked better now than a spirited debate on the Dred Scott decision.

The general at Springfield showed some of that genius that had made old Eli; under his supervision the Springfield arsenal developed the famous Springfield rifle, called the Maynard Primer, that was to be used for so many years by the American military and was undoubtedly the most effective weapon of the day. He also showed a marked proclivity for compromise in a tense period. Somehow he seemed to attract the confidence of both Republicans and Democrats. The Springfield *Republican* thought he was a fine fellow; so did President Buchanan and the New York *Journal of Commerce*—all of them reflecting different views of the national welfare. In 1860, this popularity brought the general an appointment as Collector of Customs of Boston Port—as fine a plum as one might hope for, so fine that when Lincoln was elected President, one of his first actions was to remove General Whitney from the lucrative post. And one could scarcely blame the new President, because for once the general had guessed dead wrong. Slavery and states' rights had split the Democratic convention at Charleston down the middle in the spring of 1860. Then Stephen Douglas had been unable to pull the party together, and the general had favored John C. Breckenridge, the slavery man. In an unusual departure from his own tradition, the general had gone all out for Breckinridge, and that sealed his fate with Lincoln.

The political loss became financial gain; the general turned to business, and was soon president of the Boston Water Power Company and the Metropolitan Steamship Company.

Where old Josiah Whitney, the Northampton banker, had wanted his Josiah to go to West Point and make an army career, when young

William Whitney wanted to go to the military academy his father was panicked. The thought of the boy undertaking a military career gave him pause; he knew too much about soldiering. So William went to Yale, which was run by another cousin, Theodore Dwight Woolsey, and lived the same kind of life his Whitney cousins had lived there. Yale had not improved much in the way of amenities: no indoor plumbing, bad lighting, and little heat were all still the rule.

America—and Yale—seemed to be much more violent than in the past. Intramural football had been brought to the school but abolished because of fights. Just before Whitney came to the school two town boys were killed in a "town and gown" encounter and the townspeople brought a cannon up to the campus to besiege Yale. Fortunately someone had spiked the gun.

At Yale, William Whitney distinguished himself as a school leader, but not in athletics or intellectual affairs. He was active in campus life and devoted himself to writing and speaking. In those subjects he excelled, and his room in the dormitory was a popular meeting place.

This Whitney was a handsome fellow, cast in the Saxon mold of his ancestors. He stood over six feet tall and was slender, lean, and heavily muscled, although he did not seem to take much exercise.

One of Whitney's best friends at college was Oliver Hazard Payne from Cleveland (later they would lose touch for a time because Payne would join the Union Army, while Whitney would not.) Whitney shared some of his father's reticence about recent political action; he was a fervent Democrat on campus and chose as his graduation essay the unusual topic *The Democratic Element in the State*, which can be appreciated only if the reader remembers that in 1863, when the essay was written, most Democrats were quiescent or joining up with Lincoln's Union Party. Those who continued in the North to profess themselves Democrats were suspect of sympathy for slavery, no matter how pure their actions.

If there were any doubts about Whitney's views, he dispelled them in the address he gave at the ceremonies at the old Center Church. Belittling the Union effort, he maintained that

- the war would bring disaster to the nation no matter what;
- the House of Representatives was full of incompetents;
- immigration was damnable;
- universal suffrage was as bad;
- the war had not produced a single able statesman;
- or a general.

The content was shocking, but professors love to be shocked by

their students. The *form* was even worse, and Yale did not like its forms abused. Custom called for a graduating student to work for hours before a mirror rehearsing his final address to the faculty and his fellows. In a way, the graduation essay was supposed to be the culmination of all that Yale had imparted.

Content was rightly regarded as important, but the youth was also supposed to display grace, dignity, and some humor,—all this accomplished with the stylized flair of the actor and public speaker.

Whitney stood up, his mustache drooping a little and his long dark hair combed back. He was wearing the tall-collared white shirt, narrow-shouldered suit and high waistcoat of the day, and he began to speak. He said a few words of greeting to his teachers and fellows and then he stopped, reached into his pocket, pulled forth a manuscript and read the speech.

The faculty's robes rustled, and one could hear gasps of shock in the audience. No one had ever dared break the traditions of Yale and read his departing oration. It was the event of the graduation, although not a happy memory for the overseers of the college.

"Why did you do it, Will?" asked one of Whitney's friends later. "Why didn't you memorize it?"

"It was too much trouble," replied William C. Whitney, modern American of 1863.

In 1863, if a young man were not to enter the army and fight for the Union, then he had best continue in some worthy effort at self-improvement. William Whitney decided to study law and entered Harvard Law School. These were simpler days, money and position meant much, and the fact that Whitney's grades were, at best, average did not pose any particular obstacle. But where he had been an unwilling scholar in the arts and letters, he proved to be a good law student, especially in the argument of cases.

After a year in law school, Whitney decided he was not learning enough quickly enough in the cloistered atmosphere of Cambridge, and he decided to seek employment in a lawyer's office where he could specialize. He did not go unarmed; he carried with him a letter from his father to Samuel J. Tilden, who, next to Horatio Seymour, was the most important Democratic politician in New York, and a mighty force in legal circles.

Tilden's influence paved the way: Whitney entered the office of a successful lawyer named Abraham Ricker Lawrence at 25 Nassau Street. And here Whitney became adept at a growing specialty in this age of the rapid industrialization of the Union—corporation law. Lawyer Lawrence had another specialty, the bringing of suits against the city government, and in this office Whitney had a bird's-eye view

of practical politics and an excellent seat from which to watch the machinations of a corrupt and venal Tammany Hall, run by Boss Tweed and Richard Croker. He watched and he learned his politics in the most effective school in America.

Whitney was quick to learn the law because it interested him, not so much for itself, but for the doors it could open for him. He was an ambitious young man with a serious concern for politics. He was admitted to the bar in 1865, not by the long process of examination, but largely by the declaration of his mentor that he was ready, and the acceptance of the examiner, who was Elbridge T. Gerry. Whitney had been studying in the Lawrence office for no more than seven or eight months.

His elder brother, Henry Whitney, had gone into the steamship business in New York, and now William hesitated between shipping and the law. The law won; the firm of Dimock & Whitney was formed with Henry Farnam Dimock, Whitney's roommate at Yale. They had their offices down in lawyer's row, at 17 Wall Street; they were young men, and they took small cases in the criminal courts. But they also handled the legal affairs of General Whitney's Metropolitan Steamship Company, which revived at the end of the war and began to run a spirited service between New York and Boston, on the "outside run." Their principal competitor was Jim Fisk's Bristol line, which ran the "inside run."

The young lawyers attracted public attention in a case that involved a newspaper and politics. In 1867 a Yale classmate of theirs, Charles Sweetser, had founded the New York *Evening Gazette*, a lively newspaper that delighted in attacking Tammany Hall. Sweetser was persuaded to sell a half interest to a man named Ahern. Sweetser turned to a new paper, the *Evening Mail* and let Ahern manage the *Gazette*. Ahern may have been an agent of Tammany—at least he ran the paper that way. No matter, in a few months he destroyed the paper and proceeded to sue Sweetser for having misrepresented the whole affair. Whitney became involved and he made a fine public appearance, scalding Ahern before the inquiring body and devastating the district attorney with word and look. He won the case and made a reputation for himself where it counted. Soon he was elected to the Century Club, to rub shoulders with the likes of Henry Holt, the publisher; Edwin Booth, the actor; J. P. Morgan, the banker. Holt, in particular, befriended him and encouraged him to consider the literary world. But Whitney was more interested in writing letters on public affairs to the New York *World*.

At about this time, Whitney renewed his friendship with Oliver

Hazard Payne of Cleveland, and Payne introduced him to his sister Flora. Here was a liberated girl: Flora Payne had done all the proper things, Cleveland Seminary for young ladies for three years and then the Spingler Institute for young ladies in New York. Here she had broken out of the mold by going away from school without permission, by other scandalous adventures, and generally raising the devil with the disciplinary system. Then she went off to Cambridge the next year to join the seminary for young ladies conducted by Louis Agassiz.

So spirited was Flora that she came away from Cambridge hating almost everything but Agassiz. She found the Proper Bostonians snobbish and tiresome, with "measured long pace and cold breath," and she hated their churches—except for the Unitarian. That she liked, but the remnants of Puritanism that flourished in Back Bay aroused nothing but a strong middle-western contempt.

Flora was a good, solid Democratic girl, whose father would soon become Democratic senator from Ohio. She detested John Brown and his raid, she hated the Abolitionists, and she and her father agreed that she was so upset by all that was happening in the war that it would be a good idea for her to go abroad. So in 1863 Flora went to Europe to learn languages and stay away from the conflict that bothered her so much. While she was gone she wrote regular letters to the Cleveland *Daily Record*, and they were published, bringing her a considerable literary reputation in her hometown. Her education had been far more liberal than that of her brother or his friend Will Whitney.

The Paynes were obviously a liberal family; Flora traveled as she pleased, and one day in the winter of 1868 she came to New York to see her brother. Payne introduced her to Whitney at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

Flora evidently liked what she saw and she started a flirtation.

They all went to dinner together, and Flora charmed William with learned conversation about far places he had never seen and important people he had never met.

She asked him to order for her and then she explained the menu to him. They went to the opera, and she explained the plot. They saw each other often in the next few days before she headed back for Cleveland. They corresponded frequently, and soon Whitney was invited out to Cleveland to meet the Payne family.

But on the day that William Whitney arrived at the Payne mansion, Flora was entertaining one of the young swains of Cleveland who often visited the house. He was Leander T. Chamberlain, a handsome young Presbyterian minister, and, in fact, a classmate of Oliver's and William's at Yale.

Will had come prepared to speak to Flora and, if she was willing, to ask for her hand in marriage. But the young minister damped his ardor, and he did not say the words.

Thoroughly miserable, William returned to New York in a day or two and tried to forget Flora.

Then, in December 1868, Flora made another trip to New York, and Whitney quickly discovered that she was not engaged as he had suspected, and had no plans to become engaged.

Everything changed.

They went to the opera again. Whitney proposed, and was accepted, and they hurried back to Cleveland before Christmas to announce the betrothal. If Father Payne approved, that was fine—and he did—but Flora was a thoroughly modern young woman who would have wed her choice whether he had approved or not.

Will Whitney now went back to the law with zest, to make money to get married and support Flora in style.

Soon came a case that seemed bound to affect his reputation. Whitney's friend Charles H. Sweetser was in trouble again. This time it involved his new journalistic enterprise, *The Round Table*, a literary magazine.

Charles Reade, a prominent English novelist had a new book, *Griffith Gaunt*; it was serialized in the pages of *Atlantic Monthly*. Sweetser and his associates attacked the book as one of the worst of the century, calling it "foul and immoral." They then devoted an editorial to further denunciation of the book, characterizing it as "salacious." Finally, in an article they questioned whether the book was actually written by Charles Reade.

Reade brought suit in 1869 for libel, and hired eminent counsel, including Elbridge T. Gerry, the New York lawyer who had examined Whitney for the bar.

On the surface, the defendants surely were guilty. The real problem was the third attack—questioning the authorship; it could hardly be passed off as fair comment, as the other articles might be.

But Will Whitney appeared in court on Sweetser's behalf anyhow. He sparred with the opposing counsel and made a good impression on the jury. The tactic, he told his partner, must be to concentrate on the fair comment aspects, and raise such a smoke screen that the third letter would be forgotten.

So they worked and played every legalism they could, tried unsuccessfully to have the suit dismissed, and argued that the whole affair was a matter of freedom. That, they knew, was about the only chance they had; if they lost, Sweetser might as well give the plaintiff everything he owned.

The issue became that of freedom of the press.

"Free criticism of books is then in the interest of society and the critic is a minister of truth. He holds an unenviable and difficult position. He is the censor of mankind. . . ."

When the judge summed up, luckily for the defendants, he concentrated on the first two counts, which were in a sense defensible, although the criticism was harsh and personal and prima facie libel. But was it justified? And when the jury went out to dēliberate it seemed that Whitney had convinced them that the book was prurient and vile—which was what he had been attempting to do all during the trial.

When the jury came back, the foreman announced:

"We find for the plaintiff, damages six cents."

The verdict was as good as a victory and much better than Whitney had really hoped for. The public noted the case, and now the law firm began to prosper. Whitney soon was engaged by important people such as Commodore Vanderbilt, a man who so entranced Will Whitney that Whitney was persuaded to go into Wall Street and buy Vanderbilt's Lake Shore Railroad stock on margin. Unfortunately, the rising young attorney did not know that at the moment Vanderbilt was engaged in a huge speculation, driving Lake Shore up and down to suit himself. Whitney bought just as Vanderbilt was driving down, thus losing much of the capital he was trying to amass for his coming marriage.

Will was an Episcopalian, but his devotion to the church began to wane as he courted Flora, who was a Presbyterian. Never in their lives would it make that much difference—what was of interest was the weakening of the ties of the old church on the Whitneys as the generations came forward. A few years before, Whitneys inveighed against the "loose" Unitarians who had captured control of Harvard. Yale held on to the old Puritan traditions longer, but Whitneys were now joining the more liberal churches, and would continue to stay in the mainstream of American life.

By the fall of 1869, when Whitney and Flora Payne were married (in the Presbyterian church), the law firm had succeeded, and Whitney had recovered some of his capital. His father-in-law gave him enough money to build a handsome brownstone at 74 Park Avenue, in fashionable Murray Hill.

Next year Whitney and Dimock dissolved their partnership. Dimock was the better lawyer, Whitney was more the political creature and the corporation counsel. He began to prosper in the latter field, with sizable retainers from insurance companies and railroads.

Whitney began after 1870 to create a fortune out of corporate management. His specialty was receivorship and trustee work, in

which he took a failing property, reorganized it, paid the creditors off at a few cents on the dollar, and then either took a large fee for his trouble, or—and better—managed to hold on to a good percentage of the stock in the reorganized company. A few successes, a few big stock sales—and he was a wealthy man.

Whitney now began to have the time—and he certainly had the inclination—to join the reform movement of the 1870s. Tammany's vicious depradations on the people of New York were so publicized that hundreds of young men of good will were drawn to reform. In fact, perhaps there was too much reform—in the spring of 1872 no fewer than eight separate groups were fighting for the leadership of the reform movement. Too many fishermen frightened away the fish; Tammany took warning and protected itself with some surface changes, and none of the eight groups made much progress.

However, out of this weakness finally emerged strength. One organization attracted Whitney. It was Apollo Hall, a Democratic club founded by William F. Havemeyer, Henry Clinton, and Samuel Tilden, who had become the leading spokesman for reform. Whitney's friend Havemeyer was selected as candidate for mayor by the Apollo group, and Whitney for district attorney. But the vote was split, Havemeyer was elected, and Whitney ran well down the ticket, deserted even by the Young Men's Democratic Club. Whitney did not like the defeat; it was the last time that he ever ran for public office.

Whitney did not lose interest in political affairs however, and soon had an appointment as School Trustee. Then in 1874 there came an opportunity to join Tammany instead of fight it, and Whitney decided to join to work within the system. Along with Tilden and Croker, he became a member of the general committee of the Democratic party in New York.

Whitney continued to be involved in the stock market. He nearly lost his whole fortune in the panic of 1873 because he was out on margin again, but Flora's brothers came to his financial rescue. Flora was afraid to tell her father, who hated speculators. "I am afraid he would lose confidence in you," she wrote her husband while away on a trip to Cleveland, just after the bubble burst. But Flora had some money, too, a gift given by her father on their wedding, and now she lent it to her husband to clear up his debts on the assurances that he was finished with speculation.

William Whitney had three great interests: money, politics, and family—not necessarily in that order. He came to the law at a time when the expansion of corporations and the peculations of the greedy manipulators were putting a premium on the services of talented lawyers, and Whitney had already displayed his considerable talents.

As for the family, it was a constant course upward in elegance and expenditure. The money came in, and Whitney believed in spending it for comfort.

In politics, Whitney had made an uneasy alliance with Tammany and now became a staunch supporter of Samuel J. Tilden, the leader in Democratic politics in the 1870s. Tilden became governor, Whitney was selected for the job of corporation counsel of the City of New York. The next few years were occupied with problems of the city, from the city's point of view. Suits arose involving the Croton Reservoir and the city's ferries, railroads, and other franchises. The corporation counsel was an important man, but not as important as his father, the general, in Massachusetts politics, or his father-in-law, who soon became a congressman from Ohio.

Whitney was deeply involved in the election of 1876, as Tilden sought the Presidency. He tried hard to sway his friend Whitelaw Reid, editor of the New York *Tribune*, who was on the other side, favoring Hayes. Whitney went to Washington as one of a battery of lawyers for the Hayes-Tilden election dispute when the case came before Congress—and his father-in-law, the congressman, was one of three Democrats on the electoral commission. Whitney was a vigorous advocate, but the whole matter was finally decided by partisan politics: Tilden was sacrified so the Democrats of the South could recapture control of their government machinery. Whitney did not emerge unscathed. At least one newspaper charged that he was involved in trying to bribe South Carolina legislators—but that was the kind of charge that was floating around frequently in New York in those days, and no one ever corroborated it.

In his cases as corporation counsel, Whitney came to know many of the most important lawyers in New York—often when they were on opposite sides. Elihu Root had a case against him, and out of it came a mutual respect the men maintained for the rest of their lives.

Whitney worked for the city for five years, from 1875 to 1880, through the Tweed ring litigation, and a period of intense agitation. Hundreds and hundreds of cases passed through his office.

The Payne fortune, meanwhile, was improving greatly—so much so that in 1879 Oliver Payne bought the old Frederick W. Stevens mansion for his sister and brother-in-law for $700,000. The house was at 2 West 57th Street, directly opposite the big place owned by Cornelius Vanderbilt, the grandson of the old commodore and one of the major owners of the New York Central System. Oliver's extreme generosity was occasioned by his fondness for the brother-in-law who had gone to Yale with him, and his love for his sister. Oliver had not married. He lavished money on the couple and their growing family.

The Whitneys had three children born at the Park Avenue house: Henry, or Harry; Pauline; and William Payne Whitney.

The Whitneys had been living much like the Morgans, who dwelt on Murray Hill in a quiet splendor of their own. Now with the new mansion, Flora decided to be more lavish with her spending. This huge place had to have massive furniture, and the big halls and tall ceilings demanded large paintings and Gobelin tapestries.

Will Whitney continued to work as corporation counsel and in 1880 was reappointed for another four years. His father, the general, had died and Flora's father had been elected to the United States Senate from Ohio. Will was deep in Democratic politics, attacked by and attacking somebody nearly every day. He might have stayed as corporation counsel for the rest of his career, but he grew tired of it, and became more interested in party politics. It was fortuitous that his wife was rich in her own right and that his father-in-law and brother-in-law were so generous to the family, for the corporation counsel's salary would scarcely have paid to keep up the family stable behind the house. But any man gets tired of living on his wife's money, and Whitney was no exception. In addition, he wearied of the continual battle of city government life in the biggest metropolis in America.

He had nearly abandoned his private practice of law. He visited his office only twice in two and a half years. But his decision to resign from city service was delayed—by an accident.

One day at the end of February 1882, Whitney was driving his light carriage through Central Park behind a pair of matched chestnut trotters that had been purchased with Payne money. He turned south on to Fifth Avenue and sped down to 88th Street, invigorated and at peace with his world.

Suddenly a street urchin pushed a handcart out from behind another wagon. Whitney's chestnuts snorted and shied and ran off out of control, tearing the reins loose from Whitney's hands. He grabbed them up, avoided a direct crash with a wagon, but the wheels of the carriage struck the curb and he was catapulted out into a telegraph pole on the sidewalk. He broke his left leg just above the ankle and sprained his wrist. In a week he was back at the office, hobbling about on crutches, and was riding in—not driving—his carriage. It was November, then, before he had physically recovered and was ready to think about a change.

In 1882 Whitney decided to back Grover Cleveland as the Democratic candidate for governor. Cleveland was mayor of Buffalo, and had already proved himself a reformer by cleaning up that city's politics in a few short years. The New York friends of Cleveland gathered often in Room 110 of the Globe Hotel, where they planned

strategy to capture the Democratic state convention for their candidate. Cleveland was a hard man to handle—he would not have anything to do with the Tammany machine. He would not make any deals or promise of high office for support. How can you put a man like that in office? asked the old pros. But that was the way it had to be, so Whitney and the others worked to persuade the convention that reform was the important issue.

Whitney had no hope. "Frankly I think there is no more chance of his being nominated for Governor than there is in his being struck by lightning. . . ." But he agreed that if he could get the nomination, Cleveland was a good man for the job. When Cleveland did get the nomination, Whitney worked hard for him, and helped swing Tammany around to support a man it had hated for a long time. It was an uneasy and sometimes uncertain alliance, but in the end Cleveland defeated his Republican opponent with New York City votes.

The election over, Whitney resigned his city job and tried to devote himself to the activities that were suitable for the husband of one of the richest women in the world. It was popular to be in the opera house movement—the Vanderbilts, Astors, Morgans, and Havemeyers were all involved with it—and Whitney worked for the plan to build the great new Metropolitan Opera. The old opera house—the Academy of Music downtown—was not big enough to give all the new rich the box seats they needed. Whitney became a director of the company and secured Box 7 in the parterre. Flora loyally told the press that it was the "best in the house," just the box she dreamed about.

Whitney now became involved with William Henry Vanderbilt. The alliance began in an attempt to break the power of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which had a virtual monopoly of the important steel and oil centers in the Keystone State. This was a joint move with the Rockefellers, who needed lower freight rates to make their oil venture pay. Whitney's entry was backed by his brother-in-law, Oliver Payne, who said Whitney's value to the combine was his political influence with Democrats in Pennsylvania. Whitney's task would be to push four bills through the Pennsylvania legislature that would let Vanderbilt extend the Philadelphia & Reading (Asa Whitney's old road) with the Youghiogheny Railroad. He would create the South Pennsylvania Railroad. However, the men of the Pennsylvania line, having built their railroad and not wanting any competition, had secured passage of legislation that forbade capital stock to be issued in any railroad in excess of $60,000 per track mile. Since Vanderbilt figured he needed $250,000 a mile for his proposed South Pennsylvania, this figure prevented any new railroad building at all, and assured the Pennsy monopoly.

Rockefellers and Vanderbilts and Henry Frick and his friends agreed with Oliver Payne that his brother-in-law's political connections were worth using, so Whitney was for the first time tentatively taken into the club.

Here, then, is a lesson in the making of a fortune. As the lobbyist for the crowd, Whitney corresponded with all the useful legislators at Harrisburg. He wined and dined them at Delmonico's when they came to New York. Always he promoted the plan for the South Pennsylvania.

Whitney bribed a confidant of Pennsylvania Governor Patterson, and this man's task was to keep Whitney informed of the state of his bills in the legislature and the attitude of the chief executive. Through this connection Whitney soon learned of trouble. Judge Jeremiah Black was opposed to the bills, and Judge Black had influence with the governor. Whitney knew Judge Black from the Hayes-Tilden days when they both had been trying to get Tilden into the White House. But those days were past. Whitney met Black at the Fifth Avenue Hotel and entertained him, but Black was firmly against Vanderbilt and Rockefeller. Whitney tried to bribe Black; he called it "offering a retainer." Black refused; he opposed the syndicate. He went back to Pennsylvania unbribed.

"A more incorrigible, cantankerous old chap I haven't had occasion to encounter in a long time," said Whitney ruefully.

With Black's opposition and that of the people bought up by the Pennsylvania Railroad, it looked as if the Vanderbilt-Rockefeller combine had been outmaneuvered. Whitney was afraid of a gubernatorial veto of the bills he had pushed through the legislature, and then a court confirmation of the veto. He asked for, and secured, a hearing before Governor Patterson. He knew from his agents that Judge Black had already written up the veto messages for the governor. Still he persevered, and the governor agreed to see him before he acted.

"I had the most satisfactory time of it," Whitney wrote Flora. "Through Wednesday and Thursday the battle raged, I stayed up all of Thursday and saw the sun rise in the morning . . . the governor and his whole Cabinet stayed up that whole night, but in the morning he signed all of our bills. . . ."

Whitney was a success. He was now a member of the club in his own right. No longer was he Flora Payne's lawyer husband, or Oliver Payne's political brother-in-law. He was William C. Whitney, a man with the right connections, and he was a solid member of the crew of capitalists.

The best thing of all, from the point of view of Whitney's

usefulness, was that his part in the rigging never became public knowledge. His good reputation was intact.

That summer of 1883 Whitney took an enforced vacation. Flora had gone to Europe, which she did from time to time. She went to Paris for her holidays, took the children to the opera and to the museums, and improved their education and deportment. But their fourth child, little Olive, who was always sickly, died in Paris that summer, of diphtheria. Whitney dropped everything and rushed to Paris, for Harry and Willie Payne were stricken too. The children were nursed back to health, and then the family spent the rest of the year touring Europe.

So it was the beginning of 1884 before Whitney was able to come home and follow up his success in Harrisburg. He became, then, the trusted manager of the Vanderbilt-Rockefeller railroad combine.

He plunged into a new and heady atmosphere. Soon he was corresponding with Andrew Carnegie, and dining with Hamilton Twombley and William Henry Vanderbilt, not socially, as he had done often before, but on business, and as an equal.

The combine began negotiations with George Roberts, the president of the Pennsylvania, seeking compromise, for their cut-throat competition was causing the two sides to hurt each other sorely. Both were losing money in the fight.

Roberts and Vanderbilt and other members of the syndicates were worried enough, but the meetings came to nothing. That fall Whitney and others met, with George Roberts, at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, but they still could not agree on action.

Whitney then became involved in Grover Cleveland's campaign for the Presidency that fall, and turned his management of the combine over to Twombley. Twombley was no more successful in the negotiations. Finally J.P. Morgan stepped in as mediator. He took the principals out on his yacht *Corsair* and persuaded them to accept terms that were reasonable from everyone's point of view except theirs. But Vanderbilt and Roberts could look at their own operating figures and realize that the ruinous competition had to stop, otherwise someone would go out of business. So they accepted the Morgan terms, and in the process many who were not on hand to protect themselves suffered. Andrew Carnegie, for one, who was then traveling in Europe, later complained that the settlement cost him millions of dollars.

At the crucial hour Will Whitney had made his choice. Given the option to remain in business and work with the Vanderbilts or to go into the political arena, he had chosen politics. He paid dearly for the decision in a monetary way.

Vanderbilt had promised everyone involved that they would reap

at least two dollars for every one they invested. Whitney had put in $20,000 of his own money—about all he could have saved from the small salary ($12,000) he had received for so many years as corporation counsel of New York. He was supposed to get a large sum for all he had done. Instead he got his $20,000 back in 3 percent debentures on the South Pennsylvania, which was now taken over and put out of business by the Pennsy. Twombley received $3 million worth of stock in the South Pennsylvania and immediately sold it, so he reaped a fortune. That fortune might have been Whitney's, had he made a different decision. But he never regretted choosing as he had.

In 1884, Oliver H. Payne, Whitney's brother-in-law, was treasurer of the Standard Oil Company and one of the richest men in the world. Henry B. Payne, Whitney's father-in-law was now senator from Ohio. And in New York, William C. Whitney was a powerful political figure in his own right. When he played in the ring of finance with Vanderbilt and Morgan he might have much to learn, but when it came to politicking, there was no better man with a cigar and handclasp than Whitney. At Chicago's Democratic convention that year the newspapers described him as "a man of ministerial face, manner, and cut of cloth." It was what later generations would call the best possible image.

There were some difficult moments at Chicago that July because Senator Payne had Presidential ambitions of his own. Whitney helped persuade the senator that this was not the year for a man so closely connected with Standard Oil to run on the Democratic ticket. Whitney's task during the ensuing campaign was to promote harmony between the Cleveland reformers and the Tammany Tigers, and to raise money among his wife's rich friends along Fifth Avenue. Since most of these socialities were staunch Republicans, this was no easy task. Whitney and his wife were third or fourth among the Democratic contributors. So the election campaign progressed, with Whitney playing the always important role of fund-raiser. In November Cleveland won over James G. Blaine of Maine, and the country began to settle down again from the excitement. Whitney's work was not ended, however.

A few days after the election Whitney called a meeting at the Fifth Avenue Hotel to raise money for the party. It was an emergency—New York Republicans were claiming that Tammany Hall had been up to its old tricks of voting the cemeteries and that the Cleveland victory in New York was a fraud. There was some chance of a repetition of the troubles of 1876. So Whitney called together a group of moneyed but

not well-known capitalists and elicited from them $50,000, which would be used to "supervise" a new state count. The count was watched carefully and it came out just as Tammany wanted it to. Cleveland was elected, and, unlike 1876, there was nothing the Republicans could do about it.

Immediately Whitney's stock among his capitalist friends rose sharply. Brother-in-law Oliver Payne insisted on being taken up to Albany to meet Cleveland, and he brought along friends. Soon there was speculation that Whitney was going to be appointed Secretary of the Interior, from which position he could control the public lands and thus the oil reserves.

But Whitney now also had enemies. He had been involved in the South Pennsylvania fight without attracting attention, but he had also been dabbling in the quagmire of New York Street Railway finance and politics, which had been a mess since the days of old George Law, who opposed Vanderbilt for control. Whitney's connections with Standard Oil through his brother-in-law were also a negative factor, and Senator Payne was just then under investigation for "corruption." The newspapers began referring to Whitney as "Coal Oil Billy," and some of them predicted that if he were appointed Secretary of Interior, the government would soon be in the hands of Standard Oil. Samuel Tilden, in particular, now considered Whitney an undesirable leader in the Democratic party and fought his inclusion in the Cabinet. One of the negative reasons Tilden gave Cleveland was the Whitney involvement in the didoes of New York's glittering society. It could harm the party and Cleveland, he claimed, to have a man in the Cabinet who was an intimate of the Vanderbilts, Astors, and Rockefellers.

So Interior was out. But Cleveland liked Whitney and felt indebted to him since those early days when the reformer was running for governor and Whitney brought Tammany into that first vague alliance.

Whitney, for his part, was not eager to go to Washington under these conditions. He had become intrigued with the world of high finance and expected to be able to take over the New York traction operations with a group of friends. He saw how he could create a fortune for himself in a short time.

But now Flora entered the lists. When Whitney told his wife that he was not going to take her down to Washington, she put on a dreadful scene, for she was already planning how she would impress Capitol society. Reluctantly, Whitney bowed to his wife and told Cleveland he really would like a Cabinet appointment.

And so he was appointed Secretary of the Navy.

The Whitneys moved to Washington then, and Flora did just what

she said she was going to do. She leased a large ante-bellum estate on the outskirts of Georgetown, refurbished the ballroom and redecorated completely, bringing in all the opulence in art and furnishings that marked the mansions of the rich in New York.

Josiah Whitney's friend Leland Stanford was now in Washington as senator from California. The Stanfords and the William Whitneys became great friends. Flora set the pace, and Jane Stanford followed in her big house on K Street. There were balls and soirées and costume parties. Champagne flowed and cigars staled the atmosphere, white ties and tails became an evening uniform for the political set. The Henry Adamses, the John Hayses, and the Theodore Roosevelts were all close friends of the Whitneys.

Flora Whitney occupied a position in Washington similar to that of Mrs. Astor in New York, because Grover Cleveland had come to the Capitol city without a first lady. Thus Mrs. Whitney took the mantle, and since she was rich enough to entertain at her own expense, Cleveland was pleased enough that it was so.

That state of affairs continued until the spring of 1886 when Cleveland decided to get married. The girl was Frances Folsom, daughter of Cleveland's old law partner in the Buffalo period.

Cleveland had a social problem. Back in the days when he was a lawyer and then a rising politician in Buffalo, he had kept a mistress. This fact had been aired in the election campaigns of the last few years, and yet had not prevented Cleveland from attaining the Presidency. The scandal had, however, turned a sizable segment of the church-going public against him, and this included outspoken evangelists and others who considered themselves the personal guardians of the national morals. Also, Cleveland was constantly under survey and usually under the lash of the popular press, which was heavily Republican.

President Cleveland was fair game, in other words, for every bit of scandal that might be raised. All these months in the White House, the rumblings surged about Washington: Cleveland was drunk most of the time, he pursued the wives of his Cabinet secretaries, he lived a foul life beyond description, they said.

Flora Whitney wanted to protest and fight, but Cleveland silenced her, even when the *scandale* reached such proportions that it kept Cleveland upset most of the time.

As for Whitney, he attended his wife's entertainments, but his days were spent in rigorous work. The navy had deteriorated after the Civil War. In the American tradition established after the Revolution, the end of war brought an immediate demand for dissolution of the armed forces and a consequent weakening of the posture of defense.

The Civil War ended, the navy was moribund, just as was the American merchant marine. During the last days of the Republican administration of Chester Arthur, some efforts had been made to begin rehabilitation of the navy. There had been little change in the face of a reluctant Congress, and a venal Secretary of the Navy who used the office to promote Republican party politics.

When the new administration took office the navy did not own a vessel that could put to sea and stay out for a week. One of the major problems was the quarrel between the advocates of steam and the proponents of sail. The ships built in the 1870s and early 1880s were to sail *and* steam. Consequently, most of the navy's vessels were unable either to sail or to steam properly. The navy was still building and using wooden ironclads of the *Monitor* type, although Britain and other navies had gone into production of steel battleships. *Leslie's Weekly* claimed that even "the Chilean navy could capture New York in about ten minutes."

In addition, the installations and training facilities of the navy were mostly obsolete when Whitney came into administration of the service.

Whitney set out to reform. This meant bringing in accountants to find out the exact status of ships and supplies. It meant traveling across the country to visit naval installations and appraise them. Whitney also investigated the navy yards, and caused officers who were defrauding the government to be prosecuted.

The cleanup took more than a year, for the scandalous conditions were almost unbelievable. For example, a contractor named Roach had received some $5 million, or one-sixth of the total navy appropriations over twenty-two years, to build ships. Roach did an inferior job. One of the ships, the *Dolphin*, for which Roach expected to receive $2.5 million, could not meet the specifications at its trials.

For months the issue of the *Dolphin* hung on, for Whitney had to take final responsibility for either adding the ship to the fleet or not. In the end Roach went bankrupt. Although the *Dolphin* was finally accepted and used, it was never a satisfactory vessel.

Whitney was soon building a navy. And while he did so, Flora built Washington society with New York image. She bought a house at 1731 I Street, Northwest. Sometimes she entertained at Grasslands, the estate in Georgetown. Sometimes she entertained at the home on I Street, which had twenty-six rooms, Gobelin tapestries, red plush wallpaper, and a grand ballroom furnished in the style of Louis XVI. It was sixty feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and twenty feet high, with gold brocade satin wallpaper and a red silk ceiling.

Flora was the first matron in Washington to import a chef from

Europe. Flora was the first in just about everything, and when Cleveland married she was forever after Frances Cleveland to come up to Lenox, Massachusetts, where she had bought a summer place, and join the summer set of which she was the leader. But Cleveland did not want Mrs. Cleveland to become too intimately involved with the rich Mrs. Whitney. Cleveland and Whitney were friends, in a comradely but official way, but Cleveland had no use for the New York nabobs, and his respect for Whitney stemmed from the fact that Whitney himself was not yet visibly one with the Vanderbilts and the Astors. But the families kept their distance in spite of Flora's temptations to the First Lady.

Flora had one great rival in her attempt to control Washington society, and this was Mrs. William Endicott, the wife of the Secretary of War, who constantly tried to give bigger and better parties than the Whitneys. But really it was no contest. In four years the Whitneys entertained sixty thousand guests on terrapin, canvasback duck, and champagne. Mrs. Whitney received the accolade of John Philip Sousa, who dedicated the march "La Reine de la Mer" to her, and the notice of the WCTU of St. Louis, which passed resolutions condemning her entertainments.

When the first Cleveland administration was coming to an end, the Whitneys could boast of several major accomplishments. Will had completely revamped the navy; he had taken over an inferior fleet of ships and built a new steel navy. His new navy had made it possible for Cleveland to stand up against British might in a fishing dispute, and to defend American interests in Samoa in a quarrel with Germany. Whitney had been one of Cleveland's three principal advisors on matters of national policy. He had been at the headquarters of the Cleveland administration and one of the most trusted of high-level aides.

As for Flora, her accomplishment was her own. She had made herself the indisputable doyenne of Washington. She had been hostess to the President, to diplomats, to statesmen, to important figures from all over the world. Her two houses were so famous in Washington that dressmakers and seamstresses gathered outside on days when Mrs. Whitney was holding a reception just so they could copy the styles of the guests.

Flora did have one setback: an affair that shocked official Washington and left its impress on society for months. She was forever inviting house guests from here and there, and then giving parties for them. Once she invited Cora Brown Potter, a gifted lady from the Deep South who had all the proper social credentials, but who had in recent years invaded the theater. Mrs. Potter's thespian activities had

thoroughly shocked matrons of staid Richmond and staider Charleston, but Flora never paid much attention to such matters.

Flora decided the best way to show Cora off was to have her give a reading before a Washington social group. Readings were popular; the Whitneys had already had H.S. Clapp, the Shakespearian scholar, come to them and "pronounce" Shakespeare.

Flora made up a guest list. At the top was President Cleveland, and he duly arrived, bringing with him his sister Rose, a quiet, conservative lady who had spent most of her years in the backwaters of Lake Erie. Altogether some two hundred guests were invited to 1731 I Street to make contributions to the cause of the Washington Training School for Nurses.

"What shall I recite?" asked Cora.

She and Flora then put their heads together. Flora brought out a little volume of recitations that Cora had assembled, and since they could not decide among themselves, they made Will Whitney look them over. He settled on " 'Ostler Joe"—a coarse tale of an ordinary street character. In the theater Cora had made a tremendous hit with " 'Ostler Joe," and Whitney thought it was the best thing she did.

"Recite ' 'Ostler Joe' and you will make the hit of your life," he said.

So it was decided.

The guests assembled, Miss Rose Cleveland sitting in the front row. Flora, in her most impressive afternoon gown, came forth and introduced Mrs. Potter. There was a patter of polite applause. Cora bowed and smiled and prepared to recite.

Out came the vernacular of the streets, as she mimicked the streetboys and toughs who spoke a language all their own. Cora was pleased with the selection, she knew she did it extremely well, and as she spoke, she could see every eye riveted on her.

Rose Cleveland was as one transfixed, petrified. She simply sat and stared until the end. Then she got up, pulled her cape about her and marched out of the room calling for her carriage.

"I have never been so shocked in my life," she said as she passed Flora Whitney. And without another word she left the house.

Like a flock of seagulls leaving a deserted feeding ground, the Two Hundred of Washington society arose and left the house. Flora looked on stunned, and she and Cora dissolved in tears.

As for Will Whitney, he announced that he was going to bed and disappeared for the evening.

Flora Whitney was a woman of many strengths. She had grieved for a long time after the death of Olive in Paris, and now in Washington, at the age of forty-five, she decided to have another child. Dorothy

Payne was born early in 1887, just at the beginning of the spring social season. The event was quite the talk of Washington society, but not nearly so much as another act of Flora's toward the end of the Cleveland administration.

Whitney did not play a very active role in the election of 1888—he was too busy with his navy job. Perhaps that was one of the problems. Tammany deserted Cleveland, so did many other Democratic factions, and the election of 1888 was lost to Benjamin Harrison, largely through bad times and the tendency of the electorate to blame the party in power for all the troubles of the nation.

But in the election of 1884, the Republicans could not refrain from inventing slanders about the personal character of Grover Cleveland. He was not only a political snake, they said, but he beat his wife. He came home drunk night after night, they claimed, and knocked the poor woman about.

When the election was over and the Republicans had won, it would have seemed only natural for the gossip to stop. But it grew worse. And one day there arrived a story that passed all Flora's bounds.

Frances Cleveland liked to go out and about the city of Washington, but she could not go unescorted in the Washington of 1888. One night during the autumn, Frances wished to go to the opera at Albough's Opera House. Cleveland said he could not get away; a friend, Henry Watterson of Kentucky, offered to escort Mrs. Cleveland, and Cleveland was grateful to him. Watterson and Mrs. Cleveland went to the theater, he returned her home after the performance, and Cleveland chatted briefly and thanked him again.

The story that began circulating around Washington in the next few days was that Cleveland had refused to take his wife out, she had sneaked out with Henry Watterson, and had come home to find the President drunk. Thereupon he had beaten her and called her vile names. She had then fled to the Whitneys, where Flora had taken her in and consoled her.

This story was started in Washington by Senator John J. Ingalls of Kansas, who repeated it to that loyal Republican Chauncey Depew, righthand man of Vanderbilt's New York Central Railroad. And Depew repeated the tale one night at a dinner party.

Flora read this in the papers. She was furious. She did something she had never done before, she contacted a correspondent of the Chicago *Tribune* and gave him a blistering interview, berating Chauncey Depew for his scandalmongering.

It is incredible that a man of Mr. Depew's standing and character should

> help give currency to such vile stories. . . . I do not believe Mr. Depew would undertake personally to vouch for the stories he told at that dinner, but he told them and doubtless most of those that heard him have since been telling them over to their friends. Oh! It is shameful!

Mrs. William C. Whitney then accused Senator Ingalls of the calumnies. And she proceeded to tot them up and tick them off: Cleveland was *not* a drunkard. Secretary Fairchild had *not* had to patch up a quarrel between the Clevelands. The Clevelands would *not* be divorced after the election.

The reporter went away happy. Next morning the *Tribune* printed the story, and in a few hours it was the talk of Washington.

Whitney was embarrassed. He was politician enough not to want to stir up Ingalls, even after the election. He and Depew had been friends for many years. He complained that Flora was talking too much and told her not to say anything else on the subject. But Cleveland wrote Flora a thank-you note, and what she then said to her husband is not recorded.

Depew was embarrassed. He wrote Whitney apologizing for the garbled form in which Flora had received her information—and that same day told a reporter for the New York *Tribune* that Flora was a liar!

The American press erupted, some papers calling on Whitney to challenge Depew to a duel for having wronged Flora. Almost all the stories were pro-Flora and anti-Depew, and not particularly pro-Whitney.

Whitelaw Reid accused Cleveland of putting Flora up to a prank for political purposes. Whitney apologized to Depew because Flora had told the truth.

Flora refused to have anything to do with all this. She stuck to her story, and then attacked Senator Ingalls.

The papers caught it up again, and suggested that Whitney horsewhip Ingalls. All Whitney wanted was peace in the 57th Street drawing room, where he was staying while the irrepressible Flora was down in Washington giving interviews.

In the end, they all survived. Flora quieted down and Ingalls disappeared from the limelight. Whitney came tentatively out of the 57th Street house, ready to dodge reporters, and found there were none. He and Depew renewed their friendship over dinner and liqueurs and cigars. Soon Whitney was informing Depew of the secrets of nonofficial Washington, for as Whitney left, Depew was going down, to be the new senator from New York.

The Whitneys went to Europe for six weeks that spring, visited

many of the people they had entertained at Grasslands and on I Street, and then came home to summer at Lenox, where Flora gave musicales and shepherded picnics and staged recitals and recitations and playlets and readings until fall. Flora was now ranked in New York society as second only to Mrs. Astor.

So began the Mauve Decade, and the Whitneys were squarely in the middle of it, along with the William K. Vanderbilts, the Cornelius Vanderbilts, the Astors, and the August Belmonts and the Henry Clewses and the Bradley Martins, who gave the most expensive parties of all.

However, instead of competing in Mrs. Astor's circus, where the entertainments became ever more bizarre, the Whitneys soon took to inviting the great to their houses. They entertained Josef Hoffman, Paderewski, Fritz Kreisler, and many another fine musician. The Vanderbilt entourage went to Newport; the Whitneys went to Bar Harbor, where such notable persons such as Conductor Walter Damrosch would come and visit. And often among the guests would be a Tammany politician—because Whitney had not forsaken Tammany Hall.

While Will was away in Washington, Oliver Payne had looked after his business interests. He and Will now spent the next two years strengthening the hold they had on certain transportation companies, particularly the Houston, West Street & Pavonia Ferry Railroad Company. They held a lease on the Broadway & Seventh Avenue Railroad Company's lines. Soon they absorbed the Chambers Street & Grand Street Ferry Railroad Company, and the Sixth and Ninth Avenue railroad companies.

In 1892 they began applying for franchises to construct new routes—to tap the Jersey commuting traffic and the movement uptown. One line, for example, was to be a crosstown line far up at 116th Street. The object was to create a transit *system* running along Ninth Avenue on one side and Lexington on the other, from 23rd Street south to 116th north, and to claim a large parcel of Manhattan traffic for their own. Whitney and his friends went to the New York Common Council and secured the franchises. But there were complications. Bids had to be made, and offers, and Mayor Grant had to approve. Other traction people fought to keep the Whitney group out. A fight began over the preference for cable cars (like San Francisco's) or electric trolley lines. Whitney and his allies were cable advocates, and as such public policy matters do, the issue became a New York cause célèbre.

Millions of dollars were at stake—literally. One day in January

1893 Whitney put up a million-dollar bond, and next day he had what he wanted, the cable system.

By and large, the cable line was a success and profited its investors quickly. Ironically this success came late. In the spring of 1892 Flora fell ill—her unending round of entertainments and activity had overtaxed her heart. Whitney took her to Europe, stayed for a while, and then came back to business while she remained abroad. When she returned, Whitney rented her a grand cottage at Newport, so she might rest among her friends. Whitney was busy making money.

In the spring of 1892, however, politics called once again, and Will Whitney began to work for the nomination of his friend Grover Cleveland for the Presidency for a second time. It was a daring idea; a defeated President had never before been able to emerge from the ashes to be elected again. Could Cleveland?

Whitney thought he could, and he undertook the management of the Cleveland campaign.

Getting the nomination was not easy. Tammany wanted no part of Grover Cleveland, but here Will Whitney had his say, and the long years of cultivation of Tammany paid off. While Cleveland was fishing at his summer home in Buzzard's Bay, Massachusetts, Whitney schemed in the heat of Chicago to keep the nomination from David B. Hill and assure it for his own man. The lessons of the past were not lost either. "Parson" Whitney was at his best, shaking hands, offering cigars, making such deals as could be made below the Cabinet level—for Cleveland was notoriously touchy about political favors.

In spite of Tammany's efforts, Whitney did secure the nomination of Cleveland on the first ballot, and then undertook the difficult task of managing the big man's campaign.

In the election, as the politicians could see in midsummer, New York State was going to change the balance. The key to New York State was New York City's Tammany Hall, which could swing the state one way or the other that year. Cleveland hated Tammany, and the feeling was totally reciprocated. But Whitney had long been associated with the Tammany men, in legal affairs, in business matters, and he managed to bring Cleveland to New York to meet with bosses John C. Sheehan, Edward Murphy, and Richard Croker. Whitney arranged a dinner at the Victoria Hotel, where Cleveland liked to stay, and he made sure the food was good and the liquor and wine flowed freely.

Even the liquid refreshment was not enough to bring the peace Whitney hoped for, however. He had done a masterful job in getting the enemies together, but inevitably they clashed. Cleveland's upstate New York followers were hurting the campaign by referring to Tam-

many as dishonest, said the Tammany men. That must stop, and Cleveland must promise to give Tammany the patronage of New York City and its environs, as he had failed to do after the election of 1888.

Whitney winced. He could see Cleveland bridling.

The big man smacked his hand on the table and shouted that he would promise nothing. "I'll be damned if I will."

Then Tammany would sit on its hands and he would not be elected, said Croker.

"I will tell the voters of the country that I cannot give any secret pledge and that unless I do you will not support the Democratic ticket. I will tell the voters that I do not want to stand in the way of a Democratic victory. That is what I shall do. Then, gentlemen, you can pick out a candidate to suit you, and if he is a proper man and the candidate of the party, I will vote for him."

And with that, Cleveland was quiet, and Tammany considered its course.

Whitney somehow made it possible for Tammany to come to terms without ever admitting its defeat that night, and he secured Tammany's support for the ticket.

It was essential support. When the votes were counted in November, Cleveland polled 5,556,928 and Benjamin Harrison polled 5,176,106. Although Cleveland's electoral vote was almost twice that of Harrison, all could have been changed very easily by a few mistakes. Whitney did not make them; conciliator that he was, he managed to suppress much of the professional political antagonism to Cleveland. More than any other man, Will Whitney was responsible for Cleveland's second election to the Presidency in 1892. Cleveland would never forget the favor, and from time to time thereafter, he referred to it, and attempted once again to draw Will Whitney into active political life.

The joy of political victory was great indeed, but it was to be replaced much too quickly by personal sorrow. In January 1893 Flora fell ill again. This time the doctor said there was nothing to be done except keep her quiet. By the first of February it was obvious that this was her last illness, and on February 4 she died.

But at least there was material consolation. Will was to find that his wife had signed a last will and testament, just five days before her death, leaving her entire estate to him. For the purposes of the newspapers Flora's estate was estimated at $3 million, but actually it was much more. The house on 57th Street was now worth at least a million dollars.

The death of Flora brought an end to a phase of Whitney's life.

Politics had been his first love; his family was certainly the second. After the funeral and the necessary legal actions, Whitney took his children to Florida for a long yachting vacation. Then in the late spring of 1893, he came back to New York. He was a changed man. He was obsessed by a desire to make money.

In 1893 Whitney and his associates had control of the Metropolitan Traction Company, which was capitalized at $18 million. Metropolitan began buying up every free street railway property in sight. From Vanderbilt and Rockefeller, Whitney had learned the trick of fortune making—be quick. Metropolitan would buy property, say for a million dollars, immediately recapitalize that property at $10 million without doing anything notable to change its assets except to add it to the growing monopolistic operating company. In truth, such a maneuver did increase the assets of property because the earnings would go up and expenses would go down. In the meantime Metropolitan had pocketed a $9 million profit and had enlarged its operating sphere. One by one the various individual traction companies fell into the Metropolitan net, as the latter's operations became more efficient and streamlined and the competition grew more fierce.

Whitney in 1893 was involved in a razzle-dazzle life of purchase and recapitalization. He reorganized the Houston Street Company and several other lines into the Metropolitan Street Railway Company in 1893, netting a profit of several million dollars in the transaction. Next year, he reorganized Metropolitan Street Railway and recapitalized it, netting another $5 million of value from the changeover. In other words, as with Vanderbilt's operations on the New York Central, the capitalist took the position that every time he swallowed another company and increased the earning power of the parent company, he was entitled to a capital gain, which he usually took by issuing more stock, or bonds, and selling them on Wall Street.

In 1894 Whitney had fourteen separate traction lines organized under the Metropolitan and was expanding, swallowing up the lesser lines month after month. And yet it was not a total milking operation. There was complaint about safety and noise, and it was legitimate complaint—particularly about the dreadful racket of the clanking cables. But the growing city made the improvement of the street traction system imperative, and it was improved. Not only did Whitney and his associates buy, they built—double tracks here and new lines there—and they extended their lines to the ferries that were now serving the population of the suburban Hudson River Valley and Queens and Brooklyn. By 1895 Whitney had run the capitalization of Metropolitan Street Railway Company to $16 million (not to be confused with Metropolitan Traction, the holding company) and had

raised the funded debt from $3 million to $12 million. In other words, the capitalists siphoned off the profits in capital gain every time they made a change, and issued bonds to cover their improvements (and who knows what else).

Whitney bought the Fulton Street Railroad Company. He bought Vanderbilt's New York & Harlem Railroad Company, which had become strictly a street railway after the Grand Central Terminal was built uptown at 42nd Street. Once upon a time New York & Harlem had been the cornerstone of the Vanderbilt properties, running far downtown, but this sale was an indication of the change in the look of New York, and the operations of such as the Vanderbilts, whose vista ran now from New York to Chicago, not from Centre Street to 42nd.

Whitney and his associates came on the scene at just the right time under the right combination of circumstances. Whitney had the sleight-of-hand abilities of the corporate lawyer—he was trained in the hard school of New York City administration, where every franchise holder and public utility in the city had been out to make a killing. He knew the tricks. He also had political influence, through his years in Tammany and his association with Cleveland. The Whitney group went to Albany to ask for an increase in capitalization from the $16 million figure to $30 million for Metropolitan Street Railway, and at the same time they planned to kill off Metropolitan Traction Company, the holding company.

The Whitney influence caused the State Railroad Commission to permit the change in capitalization. Whitney and his friends then killed Metropolitan Traction by exchanging share for share the new $30 million in stock for the outstanding stock of the holding company—getting thereby a huge increase in value. At the same time they floated $6 million in debentures. It was not illegal—the people who had managed to buy Metropolitan Street Railway stock on the open market profited too—but the partners held the vast majority of Metropolitan Traction, and that is where they made their profits this time.

In the end this maneuver brought Whitney into conflict with George Gould, the playboy son of old Jay Gould. The latter at one time controlled many of the most important of the New York street railroads, including the elevated lines, but after Jay's death in 1892, George was busy playing polo and court tennis at his estate in New Jersey and visiting his mistress in upstate New York, and had little time for business affairs. He simply wanted to follow his father's old plans of "rule or ruin," which had served well in a previous decade. But now, with stocks scattered about through Wall Street, those old policies were not quite so serviceable. Gould set out on a fiercely

competitive policy with Whitney and his associates. Whitney wanted the elevated system to add to his holdings, but he bided his time.

In Boston, Whitney's brother, Henry, had also gone into street railways and was becoming king of that city's lines. Indeed, Henry was to add one minor honor to the family escutcheon: He was to be one of the first in America to electrify, running a line from Park Square in Boston to Harvard Square in Cambridge, using the principles and equipment developed by Frank J. Sprague, the pioneer of electric traction.

Whitney and his friends saw the advantages of cheap electrical operation soon enough, and it led them into other profitable ventures, among them the purchase of the Electrical Storage Battery Company, which had a monopoly on batteries.

In 1895 Whitney reviewed his situation and began tidying up all the loose ends. He resigned from the directorate of the holding company that year, although he kept his holdings. He made sure all was in order because the public was growing nervous about interlocking directorates and corporate abuses. In Washington the trust busters were stirring and would soon be active. With that fine eye for appearances and political maneuvering, Whitney wanted to be in the right place at the right time. For the fact was that his friends had large ambitions. They wanted him to be President of the United States.

As noted, the Whitney interest in elective politics had evaporated when he was so resoundingly defeated for district attorney in Manhattan years before. But it had been rekindled by Cleveland, who had urged Whitney in 1892 to run for the U.S. Senate. Whitney had considered the idea, rejecting it largely because of his own commitments and the complications of Tammany politics at that moment.

In November of 1893 friends had nominated him to be a delegate to the New York constitutional convention. He had won the election, without ever campaigning, and then had turned down the office, leaving for Europe before the convention concluded. Tammany tried to run him for governor in 1894, but he refused. He was too busy making money.

Thus in 1895 and 1896 Whitney was in an admirable position for national politics. He was well known in his state and in the nation. His reputation as Navy Secretary had been excellent. There had been no scandals regarding his business enterprises. The bosses of Tammany Hall might dislike him, but he was their link to Cleveland and the upstate New York Democrats. And Whitney had the firm backing of Grover Cleveland for the Presidency, a Cleveland who had now served two terms and had no intention of testing the constitutionality of seeking a third.

During all the years of Cleveland's national power, including the Harrison interregnum, one issue had been growing in importance. It was a question of money and easy credit, which was exemplified in the coinage of silver. If you wanted cheap money and easy credit, you were for free silver coinage. If you already had your fortune and wanted a firm economy, you were against it. In 1893 when an attempt was made in Congress to repeal the Sherman Silver Act, Whitney allied himself firmly with President Cleveland against free silver, and thus became the favorite son of the Cleveland administration. In 1895 the rumors began that Whitney was the man selected by President Cleveland to succeed him in the Presidency.

As 1896 began, it was apparent that the free silver issue would be the most important in the coming election. By his statements, Whitney identified himself almost completely with the Cleveland position against purchase of all the silver that could be mined and the consequent issuance of more paper money backed by silver. Tammany was behind him, and friends told him he could have the nomination for the asking. Yet he shrugged it all off. He told his secretary to prepare one box labeled *Politics, National Convention,* and to put all requests and urgings into the box without showing them to him. He said he would not be a candidate, and he meant it. He kept repeating the statement in talks and letters to friends.

Of course, this kind of behavior was just that followed by a certain type of candidate too, and so a great number of friends and well-wishers simply did not believe Whitney. The importunations continued.

Whitney had been planning a trip to Europe that summer to stop all the talk. If he was out of the country, it was proof he was uninterested. But he was persuaded that he must go to Chicago, to the convention, not to be a candidate, but because he was Cleveland's strongest supporter for the "sound money" position. Again, when Whitney canceled his passage to Europe, the rumors arose that he would indeed be a candidate. But no matter how many declarations he made, few Democrats really believed him.

In Chicago, Whitney organized the gold men. The crisis brought out his political strength: his ability to take men of widely differing views, cajole and push them to stand together. But he could not bridge the silver gap. No man could have done that in 1896 in the Democratic party, for the feelings were too strong. On June 23 the press estimated that at Chicago 545 Democratic delegates would come out for free silver, as opposed to 349 for gold. Whitney's plan as floor manager for the Cleveland forces was to prevent the silver men from getting the two-thirds majority necessary under the Democrats' rules, and then

forcing them to settle for "bimetallism," which meant the preponderance of gold over a controlled silver. You could say that Whitney's success or failure was the key to the Democratic convention.

Of course the silver men thought Whitney was playing a waiting game, and they sat up late nights in Chicago planning strategy to annihilate his support.

Whitney, because he was so rich now that money had come to mean little to him, made the mistake of chartering a special train of three parlor cars, which he filled with Thomas Fortune Ryan, Editor Charles Miller of the New York *Times*, Thurlow Weed, and other "sound money men." Whitney laid on a supply of liquor, champagne, pâtés, and caviar. When the news of their coming in this style hit Chicago, some wag dubbed them "The Millionaire Contingent," and before they ever arrived in Chicago the silver men were shouting, "I told you so!"

It probably would not have made any difference. When Whitney and his friends came out of the Chicago station and pressed through the crowded streets to the hotel, they saw that the silver men were in charge. Lampposts were festooned with "silver" placards and banners; hawkers hooted "silver" in the streets; and delegates marched about carrying shining posters and singing "silver" songs.

Like a good general, Whitney had scarcely arrived at the Auditorium Hotel when he ordered all his associates out to scout about the other hotels and meeting places of the city.

As was so often the case, the detailed report confirmed the first impression: They would be hard put to get a hearing for "sound money." It would be hard to nominate a gold man this year. Indeed, said Whitney's agents, there was an entirely different atmosphere in the convention city this summer; the old stalwart party members seemed to have vanished, replaced by an unruly gang of farmers and miners and shopkeepers, all of them shouting for silver.

But Whitney saw a ray of light.

"Those men don't know they're in control," he told his friends. He had an idea. If he could get a candidate—and he had one, William E. Russell—and just hold on long enough, the silver men might exhaust themselves in quarreling about which of the many favorite westerners was to be chosen. And then, when the convention was exhausted, Will Whitney would stand forth, looking like a forty-year-old clergyman despite his fifty-five years, and he would offer compromise and sweet reasonableness and promise for the future. It was a chance anyhow, and the only one remaining that the gold men had—and they knew it.

That first night he called a caucus of all the gold men, and listened

as they explained just where they stood in every state. The results were not encouraging.

Next day in the wilting Chicago heat, Whitney held meetings all day long, planning strategy, considering how to use the strength he had. He sent his agents out and met them later at the Palmer House. They reported dolefully that they had buttonholed dozens of delegates—and had not managed to convert a single one. That in itself was so unusual in a Democratic convention that Whitney could sense his problem was more serious than even he had expected. He had pleaded with his men not to bolt—now he must face the definite possibility that silver would bolt if the day would not be won. But small chance. . . .

What money could do, Whitney did. On Saturday night he arranged a huge rally for gold to celebrate Independence Day, and managed to attract a crowd of six thousand listeners who heard the apostles of sound money present reasoned arguments for their cause. Talking to themselves and to supporters from Chicago, Whitney and his friends began to believe they might have a chance.

Other gold men argued that Whitney was the logical candidate, and from out of nowhere Whitney buttons appeared suddenly on Chicago streets. But Whitney disregarded this show; he had plenty to do as the trains arrived and kept on disgorging silver men.

The first fight was to get David Hill, a sound money man from New York, selected as temporary chairman. That would give them control of the convention. Precedent held that the temporary chairman would be selected by the national committee, which was safely in gold hands. But the silver men announced early on that they were throwing out all the old rules. The national committee did nominate Hill, but the silver men rose up for Silver Senator John Daniel—556 to 349. The issue was joined there.

After the Democratic convention knocked out Will Whitney's candidate for temporary chairman in the first few minutes of the meeting on July 7, 1896, about the only good news he heard was that the silver men did not at the moment have a clear two-thirds majority. So he would fight. And fight Whitney did, until the credentials committee went wild, threw the Michigan gold men out of the convention, threw the entire Nebraska delegation of gold men out of the convention, and seated silver men, including William Jennings Bryan.

Bryan was to make a speech to the convention, and this middle-sized, square-jawed westerner stayed up all night before delivering it and came to the podium looking disheveled and weary.

But then he began to speak.

"You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold. . . ." he said.

And the meeting erupted in a thunder of applause that became howling, hooting, shouting, stamping, and whistling. For a time it seemed that the chairman would never quiet the crowd and that the convention would never be able to get back to business.

The rest is well-known history. With a two-thirds majority, which these machinations gave the silver men, they nominated Bryan, put through their platform, and marched away with the convention.

Whitney then sat the election out, and when he saw that Bryan had captured the Democratic party and turned it from the agency he had known into an entirely new organization, he made a major decision.

Will Whitney retired from politics forever.

In 1896, politics behind him, Whitney turned all his efforts to making money. His object was to control the entire New York street transportation system. Except for Gould and the elevated roads, his one great rival was Henry Hart, who owned control of the Third Avenue Railroad Company, which ran right through the middle of Whitney's Metropolitan. For three long years, in the late 1890s, Whitney and Hart interests fought, litigated, and schemed against one another, but in the end Whitney and his friends staged a stock market raid on Hart's company, bought control on the open market, and ended the war. It cost them $6.5 million to do it, an indication of the league in which Whitney and his friends were playing around 1900.

With this acquisition the value of the Whitney group's holdings went up again, and was estimated at $165 million. Whitney and Thomas Fortune Ryan were the public figures in which the press were most interested. With a company worth nearly $200 million, the partners could stand the insults and investigations that came to them at a time when Teddy Roosevelt began trust busting and others began muckraking.

There were some skirmishes in these years, and some adventurers took aim at the Metropolitan transit system, sometimes managing to make a profit, sometimes not. In the years just after the turn of the century, franchises were examined by the muckrakers and others. This could be embarrassing—Whitney always valued his franchises at more than the physical equipment of his lines.

Working with Tammany, for ten years Whitney and his group managed to prevent serious consideration of a subway system, until public opinion overwhelmed even Tammany in 1898. Then, Whitney and Ryan announced that they were interested in building a subway at

the appropriate time. But now citizens, leaders, and press complained about the virtual monopoly of street transportation by the Metropolitan group. And when the first subway contract was put up for bids in 1900, Metropolitan was outbid by a contractor named John B. McDonald, and when he failed, August Belmont stepped in to take over. The skirmishing began again.

Whitney handled it all. He recognized the changes in the times and saw that it was not going to be possible to continue to monopolize the city's transportation. He began to take measures to protect the huge fortune he had now amassed. One such measure was to restructure the companies and form a new Metropolitan Securities Corporation to hold the transit stocks. Thus, if he began selling out his shares, such transactions would be less noticeable.

In these last days, until 1902, when he retired from business, William Whitney turned his restless eye to many an enterprise, seeking adventure and profit. His children were grown, his wife was dead, and this was his amusement as well as his life's work. He went into the gas and light business, and made several million dollars.

Thomas Fortune Ryan, a Virginian, led him into the tobacco business, first to fight James Buchanan Duke and later to join Duke in making another fortune by buying up a group of tobacco companies and forcing American Tobacco into mergers.

The fortune was widespread: Whitney was a bank director several times over, a life insurance company director, and he was involved with the Guggenheims in the Guggenheim Exploration Company. But one thing he never repeated after the early adventure in the South Pennsylvania—he never dabbled in railroads. He could remember only too well what Vanderbilt and Morgan had done to him.

Whitney was involved in many an enterprise—automobiles and electric cars and trust companies—that brought him much grief during the trust-busting era. He bought a part of the Tonopah Mine in Nevada and sent John Hays Hammond, the mining engineer, to consult with the operators. That mine yielded $125 million in gold and silver in twenty years, with profits of $32 million.

He traveled often to Europe, he looked up old Whitney haunts there that went back before the day that John Whitney sailed for the new world, and he restored some places that were dear to Whitney heritage.

In the summer of 1895 daughter Pauline married a young Englishman, son of Lord Alfred Paget. The wedding of American millions and British titles was common in the millionaire set in those years; Pauline was following a fashion set by Consuelo Vanderbilt. As

a matter of fact, Consuelo's brother Cornelius was an usher at the Whitney wedding, and Alta Rockefeller was a bridesmaid.

The young couple were married at St. Thomas's Episcopal Church in mid-Manhattan, and walked up an aisle beneath eighteen arches of laurel studded with chrysanthemums. Cleveland was there, to do honor to the man who had served him so well. So was Oliver Payne, then one of the richest men in the country and a figure virtually unknown outside the highest financial circles.

Times had changed for the Whitneys in many ways. Harry and Payne, his two sons, had grown up in luxury. Long gone were the days when Harvard was too loose for Whitneys; both boys went to Yale, but only because their mother insisted; her brother had gone there, and, of course, so had Will Whitney. Will did not much like Yale; he remembered his years there with considerable loathing. Obviously he had not forgotten the furor he raised when he had read his commencement essay instead of memorizing it as the unwritten rules demanded. He referred often within the family to the "narrowness of Yale."

After Pauline married, Whitney went to Bar Harbor, which he always preferred to Newport. He entertained his brother's wife and other members of the family and a handful of politicians. The Secretary of the Navy came ashore to the Whitney place.

The boys married, and he settled millions on them; he gave Harry the 57th Street mansion, which was right across the street from the house where the bride had grown up.

Once Pauline and the boys began leaving home, Whitney was very lonely. In his travels he met and married a handsome Englishwoman, Mrs. Edith S. Randolph, widow of a captain of the British Army, but an American, the daughter of a Baltimore physician and reputedly a beauty even in middle age.

The marriage created trouble for Whitney. Oliver Payne had long been Whitney's friend—in fact he claimed to have picked Whitney out from among all his acquaintances to marry his beloved sister. And Payne had been extremely generous to Flora and her husband when Whitney was first a struggling, almost penniless lawyer and Payne was already a millionaire. He had continued to be generous in the years that Whitney spent working for small salary as New York's corporation counsel. He had made money gifts to the children. And finally, for a time, he had lived with Whitney and Flora in the house on 57th Street.

When Whitney remarried, Oliver Payne took it as a personal affront to the memory of his sister. Payne was of the opinion that he had made Whitney, and that this remarriage was an insult. He quar-

reled with Whitney, and then attempted to turn the Whitney children against their father for his disloyalty to Flora.

Will had spoken to them about the marriage during the winter, and they had all thought he was not going to pursue the matter when they objected. "The house is so much Mamma's," wrote Harry, "that it is hard enough to think of somebody living in it in her place. . . ."

Pauline chilled and turned against her father. So did Payne. The fact was that Will Whitney had known of the disapproval of his children. He had gone ahead, at Bar Harbor, and to save the children trouble and to avoid scenes he had married when they were away.

That rankled everyone.

The breach with Harry was healed, and there never was any breach with Dorothy, his favorite among the children. But Pauline and her husband and Payne and his wife had very little to do with their father from that time on.

As for Oliver Payne, he disinherited Dorothy and Harry for adhering to their father—quite a blow, considering all those millions and the fact that he was a bachelor. And as for Will Whitney, he did not go to his son Payne's graduation from Yale. Whatever his private thoughts in the matter, he would not have been welcome, for after the graduation came the reunion of the class of '63—and that meant he would have had to face Oliver Payne.

The second Mrs. Whitney came from Baltimore society, and was quite acceptable as a member of New York's 400. There was nothing disgraceful in the affair—certainly nothing like the Vanderbilt-Belmont scandal where August Belmont had made off with Willie Vanderbilt's wife. Edith's husband had died; so had Will's wife; it was the most natural thing in the world—except to embittered Oliver Payne.

Whitney continued largely in his old ways. He had never been much interested in Flora's social ambitions, and now the people who came to the house were such as Cleveland, Teddy Roosevelt, Chauncey Depew, and Elihu Root—men of history, not just moneyed people. He was involved in committees and social work, but in the way that rich people are involved. When Cleveland wanted something for one of his loyal associates, he had no hesitation in writing Whitney for $100,000 to endow a professorial chair for the man. (Whether or not he got it is unknown.)

As if he had not suffered enough unhappiness in losing a wife, the affection of half his children, and his best friend, misfortune came again. On February 21, 1898, while visiting in South Carolina, Edith Whitney was injured in a riding accident; she misjudged height while riding swiftly under a bridge and fractured her cervical vertebrae. She

was paralyzed and could not be moved north until Whitney ordered a railroad car especially remodeled so she might be brought home. When the train arrived on the New Jersey shore, an ambulance was taken across on the ferry, and Whitney walked beside it, all the way to the house.

Edith was bedridden and in considerable pain. They moved her from time to time for her health from New York to Long Island, on private ferries whose captains had specific orders that under no conditions were they to bump anything. Whitney sat up nights reading medical books and consulted every doctor he knew or had ever heard about.

Nothing helped. Edith grew weaker as the months rolled on, and after fifteen months she died, on May 7, 1899. Again President Cleveland was on hand to sustain his friend through the funeral.

Having given his large 57th Street house to Harry, the elder Whitney now lived at 821 Fifth Avenue, on the corner of 68th Street, in a house remodeled by Stanford White to his specifications. He became friends with Finley Peter Dunne, the humorist, and arranged that Dunne become editor of the *Morning Telegraph*, a theatrical and sporting newspaper. Whitney kept an expensive racing stable. He lived among works of art, as New York millionaires were wont to do, with paintings by Reynolds, Raphael, Millet, Van Dyck, and others. And when all was ready, on the night of January 4, 1901, Whitney gave a large ball, a party for one of his nieces, that also marked his own return to society after mourning his second wife. He had the largest private ballroom in the city, paneled in carved gilded oak, taken from a grand French chateau near Bordeaux, hung with Boucher tapestries, and a 45-foot wall punctured by an alcove where sat the orchestra to play for the guests. Like many another American millionaire, Whitney had taken treasures of art from England, France, Italy, and Greece. The street entrance, for example, was reached through large wrought-iron gates and bronze that had originated in the Doria Palace in Genoa. Whitney had indeed, as biographer Mark Hirsch noted, succeeded in re-creating a Renaissance palace; $2 million were spent for that house.

In the last years of his life, Whitney had houses and land in New York; in Old Westbury, Long Island; off Sheepshead Bay in Coney Island; in Aiken, North Carolina; at Bar Harbor, Maine; and at Lenox, Massachusetts. He had just about every possession money could buy—including the English Derby, which was won by his horse, *Volodyovksi*, in 1901. He and August Belmont bought some land near Floral Park, Long Island, and built a race track which they named after Belmont.

But he did not have much time left.

On January 28, 1904, Whitney went to the Metropolitan Opera to hear *Parsifal.* He was not feeling well and had left the office early that day. He soon left the performance and went to the director's room, where he lay down on a couch.

An hour later he was worse, and that very night he was operated on for acute appendicitis. Dorothy and Harry came, but Payne and Pauline stayed away. He developed peritonitis, and in four days he was dead, in spite of a last-minute operation. Payne, they say, was on his way from Georgia, finally, and Pauline was on her way from England.

William C. Whitney was gone, but his impress remained on his circle and the world that lived on after him. His sons and daughters would play roles almost as important as his own. Yet their parts would be more limited, for the America of the twentieth century would become so complex that no one man could accomplish in a lifetime all the things that the adventurer Will Whitney had done.

He had been a successful trial lawyer, and he might have continued in that course.

He had been a canny New York politician—in the twentieth century—a lifetime accomplishment of its own. But Will Whitney had spent his time in government and city politics almost as a sideline toward the end.

He had been a national political figure of serious note, and a member of the Cabinet, the builder of the modern navy. Certainly this accomplishment alone would have been enough to bring his name to historical note; but he had also been one of Grover Cleveland's principal advisors in matters of state *and* his major political advisor. In a later time, Franklin D. Roosevelt would have half a dozen men doing what Will Whitney did all by himself; later Presidents would have even more.

He had been one with the Vanderbilts and the Rockefellers in business, again enough to satisfy a lesser man. He had earned his own fortune in remarkably apt manipulation of the New York street railways, not entirely to the disservice of the people.

And finally, he had been a patron of the arts and an important figure in the sporting world. This Whitney was indeed a giant among Americans. How many men, indeed, have turned down a chance to run for the Presidency?

8/ The Man Who Knew the Secret of the North Pole

From the New Haven line of Whitneys came one of the most adventurous people ever to bear this illustrious name. He was Harry Whitney; he would go down in history as the one disinterested man in the world who knew the secret of the discovery of the North Pole.

Harry Whitney was the son of Stephen Whitney, born in New Haven and educated at St. Paul's School on Long Island. As a boy he was adventurous, and when he grew up he found he had more love for adventure than anything else and no inclination to go to college. So he "bummed around," worked for a while in Connecticut at various jobs, and then went West.

The spring of 1896 found this Harry Whitney operating a sheep ranch in Arizona, and at the time he thought this would be his life forever. One day, however, he was out riding the range when he and two friends saw a timber wolf. Harry bet that he could lasso that wolf. He gave chase, overhauled the wolf and lassoed it—just as he said.

Harry got down to take his rope off the animal. The wolf jumped up and grabbed Harry Whitney's arm. Snarling and growling, but never releasing that grip, the animal began to move, tearing deeper and deeper into the arm. Whitney shouted, his friends leaped from their horses and clubbed the wolf to death with their rifle butts. Only then could they pry those jaws apart.

The arm was badly mangled and they were worried about gangrene. Whitney was taken into town to the local doctor, who patched him up as best he could and then recommended that Whitney seek better advice—quickly—before he lost his arm. The nearest hospital was Tucson, and that is where Whitney went. Several operations were performed that spring to save the arm. He was in the hospital all summer long.

In the fall Whitney went back East, to his family's summer place at North East Harbor, Maine. He still was convalescing; he still had trouble with the arm. So adventure was out for the moment. He went to

Islip, Long Island, to visit his sister, who had married and moved there some years before. He loafed around, growing impatient—for there was nothing he would rather be doing than hunting that wolf's brother. He was a restless soul, this Whitney—another of those big, strapping Saxons with the long face and sandy hair that were so typical of the descendents of John Whitney of Massachusetts.

For a time, after he recovered, he went hunting down in Georgia and the Carolinas with Frederick Brewster, another millionaire. Whitney's investments included several developmental companies in Louisiana, and he combined hunting trips with directors' meetings. He never stayed long in one place. He had enough money to gratify his desire for constant movement and adventure.

In 1901 he was off on a long yachting trip with his friend "Bertie"—Robert R. McCormick, president of the Chicago *Tribune*. Then he was back in Connecticut, and for a time he tried to tie himself down in the copper business with the trading firm of Wallace & Sons. But he did not like the business world—adventure called again. In 1903 Whitney shipped out as a deck hand on one of the big sailing ships that ran the grain race to Australia. When he reached the land down under he decided he would prospect and went off into the gold fields for six months, with no luck. He decided he would go into the sheep business, and went "out back" to join a big outfit running thousands of sheep. He learned Australian sheepranching here, and when the wanderlust struck him again, he headed back to the United States, and for his old stamping grounds in the West. He tried his hand again at running sheep in Montana and then in Wyoming and Arizona. Everything went well for the first few months. He worked hard and enjoyed himself by hunting mountain sheep and bear and elk and the big mule deer of the western mountains. Then the wanderlust struck again.

Harry Whitney lived thus until 1908, when he set sail for the frozen north on what at first appeared to be just another of his hunting trips, but which turned out to be one of the great human adventures of all time.

In the spring of 1908 Whitney had heard of the coming expedition of Admiral Robert Edwin Peary toward the North Pole, and through friends he found that he could "hitch a ride" up to the Far North with the admiral. With G. H. Norton and E. P. Larned, another pair of "sportsman passengers," Whitney joined the Peary ship, *Roosevelt*, at New Bedford and steamed north into Canadian waters. At Sydney they stopped and the expedition waited for the *Erik*, a steamer that was used as a seal hunter, but which would add supplies to Peary's expedition on this occasion. The hunters moved aboard the *Erik*, and on July 18 the ship sailed out of Sydney bound for northern Greenland.

Whitney and his companions intended to spend a season in Etah, hunting walrus, polar bear, and the then-mysterious muskox, which had been seen by only a few white men because the animal frequented only the frozen north. They would be left at Etah on their own.

Whitney had with him three rifles: a .30-.40, a .35, and a .22 calibre. He and Norton had bought a whale boat with a three-horsepower outboard motor. They had spent weeks assembling their hunting gear of tents, stoves, sleeping bags, boots, and utensils. Whitney knew what he was about. Those years of hunting in the West and in the cold of the Rocky Mountains had taught him to understand what weather meant to an outdoorsman. He had taken grave care in the outfitting of his expedition. As a man of means he had no problem in gratifying his wishes, and he had even laid in a supply of goods to barter with the Eskimos.

They sailed just after midnight, beneath a sky studded with stars, across a sea as smooth as glass, and when the sun came up they found themselves in a cloudless sky. The gulls slid effortlessly around the ship looking for handouts, and the sea was calm and had never seemed more serene.

But there were other signs. . . .

Early in the afternoon of the first day they passed St. Paul's Island to port, and saw the hulls of two big steamers which had been wrecked in a severe storm just two weeks earlier. These Newfoundland waters around Cape St. George could switch in a moment, it seemed. Captain Sam Bartlett of the *Erik* told them tales of his experiences off this coast, tales of daring and wonder. And soon they saw whales.

Then—fog! The dreaded fog of the north, it settled down on them in a gray blanket so thick that a man could not see the ship's prow from the bridge. The foghorn set up its sad and lonely wail, and they crept along for the next day, blowing those blasts at two-minute intervals to warn away anything that lived in the gray world that surrounded them.

It was midday on July 19 when they broke out of the fog bank, hardly too soon, for they were approaching the Straits of Belle Isle and the rocky coast of Labrador. As they came up, the icebergs were coming down—there was the threat they had so narrowly escaped in the fog.

The ship stopped at Hawkes Harbor in southeastern Labrador to take on whale meat from the whaling station there. This would be the basic food supply for Peary's dogs on the polar expedition.

They stayed two days in Hawkes Harbor, while Captain Bartlett loaded and the gentlemen passengers went fishing. Whitney was a curious man, and he took time to study the modern whaling techniques, which had changed a good deal since the old days when the

oil was wanted for lamps and the whalebone for ladies' corset stays, and the rest of the animal was consigned to the sharks by the great whalers of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Nowadays—in 1908—the whalers used everything but the smell of the animal. They flensed off the blubber in the old ways, and if it was a sperm whale, they took that wonderful clear oil out of the "case" in the head. Then they used the rest, the least valuable of it and the bone ground up for animal food and fertilizer.

Whaling was comparatively easy here. The little steamer *Cachelat* went out from the station in clement weather, hunting whales, and catching them with the harpoon gun mounted on the sturdy bow. The harpoon contained a bomb, which usually killed the animal on impact, so there were no "Nantucket sleigh rides," none of the romanticism of the past. It was a big, grisly business, just like the slaughter of cattle in the Chicago stockyards. Whitney, the sportsman, was glad to be away from it. He got away—even as Captain Bartlett loaded thirty tons of stinking whalemeat into bins on deck—on a trip with Harold Bartlett, the ship's second mate, and his friend Norton. They took the whaleboat down to the bottom of the bay and went fishing in a clear stream that emptied into the sea just there. They tried for salmon—no luck. They tried for trout—and in an hour had landed fourteen sea trout and one brook trout that went four and a half pounds.

A few hours after the fishing expedition, when they were still feeling the effects of the black flies that had harried them all the way, the ships weighed anchor and headed north for Turnavik, which was a codfishing station run by Captain William Bartlett, the brother of Captain Sam and father of Captain Bob Bartlett, the skipper of Peary's *Roosevelt.*

They picked up salt and other supplies. They compared hunting notes (Whitney had been on a sealing expedition a few years earlier with Captain Will Bartlett so they had much to talk about).

Now they raced north again, the men of the *Erik* doubly eager to get up into the cold, for the whale meat in the deck bins was rotting so badly that everything, even the ship's food, tasted and smelled of rotting whale.

The weather turned rough, a sea smashed over into one of the deck bins and knocked the side out of it. Suddenly onto the deck of the *Erik* slashed fifteen tons of slithering whale meat, so ripe and so soft that the deck hands very nearly could not scrape it up and get it back into its place.

They sailed through alternate strips of good weather and fog, and on July 27 they came out of a fog bank to see Greenland before them, the high, rugged coastline topped with snow. They were up in the

latitude of daylight summer, and the sun was making its circle without ever dipping below the horizon. Next day they crossed the imaginary line and were within the Arctic Circle.

As they passed Disco Island they ran into whales again, and so many icebergs that the captain was worried lest they hit more fog at the same time—which might be disastrous. At Melville Bay the bergs were numerous and big, and Whitney could look deep into the green and peacock-blue depths of the clear ice.

They were nearing the destination of the hunters, and on July 30 they sighted Cape York and headed for North Star Bay to find the *Roosevelt.* But she was not there, so they turned the ship toward Walstenholme Sound, and then they came in. Just outside the bay they were greeted by a boatload of Eskimos, one of whom was their pilot. He took them inside safely, and Whitney and his friends prepared to disembark. The others had come to seek a little adventure. They would hunt for a while and explore—and then go back with the boat.

Whitney and Norton and Larned went out in Whitney's boat, and they killed enough eider ducks in a few minutes shooting to feed the whole ship's crew.

They went exploring, took two Eskimos and visited the Eskimo village on the mainland. These strange and almost unknown people welcomed the foreigners; they were eager to trade skins, narwhal tusks, and walrus tusks for guns and ammunition and especially for tobacco, which had become the addiction of the north country early in the contact between races.

Whitney and his party were waiting for Peary to come up in *Roosevelt.* He had stopped at Meteorite Island to pick up fifty Eskimos and 170 dogs to help in the polar struggle. He arranged a walrus hunt for the three gentlemen hunters, assigning three Eskimos to guide them and take care of them. This was what Larned and Norton had come for!

Off they went. Three hours up the sound they spotted a pair of bulls on a cake of ice. They matched for shots. Whitney won one shot, and killed his bull expertly. Larned only wounded his animal, and in the confusion Whitney's bull slipped off the floe and sank in deep water, and then it took ten more shots to kill the wounded and infuriated bull that was left. When they dragged him ashore, they estimated that he weighed two thousand pounds. They tried to hoist the carcass from the water, but the six of them could not, so they left it, took the tusks, and went on.

The walrus hunt was not entirely for sport—the Eskimos needed meat—and a few days later they were out again, this time hunting cows and pups. Whitney had accidents: the flywheel of the outboard spit back on him and the handle struck him in the knee. For a time he

thought the bone was broken. Then he cut a finger badly. But Harry Whitney took his luck as it came—he would not miss the big walrus hunt because of his injuries.

Peary announced that he needed a great deal of meat to feed dogs and Eskimos, and so with harpoon and rifle Whitney himself killed seventeen walruses in ten hours; Norton and Larned got another ten, and their fellow hunters killed thirty more. They had one accident—a bull walrus charged the whaleboat and stuck a tusk through the starboard gunwale.

Peary was pleased with the hunters' bounty. With the deck of *Erik* covered with walrus carcasses they headed north again to Orlik Bay. Here they would hunt for caribou. The walrus hide and the caribou skins would be used by the Eskimos. The meat would be for the expedition. Nothing would be wasted.

Norton, Larned, and Whitney took the power boat and camping gear and, with eight Eskimos, headed up the bay to find caribou. But the weather turned cold and foggy, and the ice closed in so they dared not go farther by boat. The short summer was ending, and winter was already beginning to show its fangs. They pitched camp on the rocky shore, the mountains behind them, and went to bed in their sleeping bags in a heavy rainstorm.

This Whitney was certainly a tough man. Next day, taking four Eskimos, he marched for sixteen hours, scouring the land for caribou, his injured knee paining him on every step. No caribou. Using Whitney's .22, one of the Eskimos killed three large hares, and so they had their supper. Much later, Larned and Norton came back: Norton had killed only one fawn, while Larned had good luck, he had bagged seven caribou and seventeen ptarmigans.

So they all ate again, caribou steaks this time, and then the Eskimos packed up the meat and they headed back to camp. Peary had told them that with this spurt of cold weather he was now in a hurry.

The ships were loaded with meat, they headed north to Etah, stopping only for one more necessary walrus hunt. They reached that settlement at midnight on August 12, and found *Roosevelt* there ahead of them, Admiral Peary directing the unloading of stores and establishment of a base.

Here, also, Whitney encountered a representative of the expedition of Dr. Frederick A. Cook, who was in fierce competition with Peary to be the first to reach the North Pole. Rudolf Franke had been left behind by Dr. Cook to take care of base and supplies. Whitney found him in dreadful shape, gaunt and scrofulous, hair hanging to his shoulders, his beard unkempt, but struggling on.

From Etah, the gentlemen hunters fanned out on several expedi-

tions, going fishing when they felt like it; sometimes hunting the giant hares with small arms, and helping the Eskimos catch auks that they used for winter shirts, the women chewing the skins and then sewing them together.

The men of the ships hustled now, for it was soon going to be time to get away before the pack began to close in, and *Erik* must move in a few days or stay on all winter. Captain Bob Bartlett was eager to be off north, to thread his way through the ice before the going got too rough for *Roosevelt.* And Peary was as eager as any man.

On an expedition to the south, Whitney nearly lost his boat. They had come ashore, and the tide had stranded the boat, so he and his four Eskimos pulled it into the water. The minute they hit deep water they saw that the boat was leaking badly—faster than they could pump with their hand bilge pump. Whitney sprang to the bow, cut away the floor boards with an axe, and saw that they had knocked two holes in the boat's bottom as they dragged it over the rocks. They stuffed it, then, with deer hide, and battened it down, and then headed back, 42 miles to the north, pumping and praying all the way home.

On the way back, Whitney pondered. The days of the hunt were almost ended, and *Erik* would soon be heading away. He was not pleased with the results of the hunt so far. He had wanted a polar bear for his collection. He had wanted muskoxen and had seen none. He was free and well off so that he had no worries about his future, nor any concerns that demanded that he come back to America. So he made a decision: He would stay ashore and spend the next year hunting big game in the shadow of the North Pole.

He checked with Peary, who was perfectly willing to let him stay on and, if necessary, let him use part of the caches of provisions that had been put ashore at various points.

So it was settled, and at half past four on the afternoon of August 18, *Roosevelt* steamed away. Peary, on his search for the pole, took 22 men, 49 Eskimos, and 246 dogs into the vast white wilderness of the north.

Once they were gone, Captain Sam Bartlett and Whitney's friends tried to persuade Harry to change his mind. He was quite mad, they said, and he was likely to go completely mad from loneliness. For Peary had left two men only, and they were not here at Etah but far away at Annootook. He could die here in the wilderness and no one would know the difference. No man had ever done so foolish a thing—he must not stay on alone.

But Whitney's mind was made up. And after argument, Captain Sam Bartlett and the others shrugged their shoulders: If Whitney wanted to commit suicide, nobody could stop him.

They did the best they could for him. They lent him clothes to piece out his slender wardrobe, for he had not come expecting to stay during the cold weather. The carpenter and the bosun of the *Erik* helped him build a hut from provision boxes, a hut 10 feet wide and 12 feet long and 8 feet tall at the roof peak, no window, and a door looking out to the east.

The crew landed coal for him, and a stove, and all the supplies they could spare. Even if they thought he was crazy, they were not going to help murder him.

On the morning of August 21, Whitney and five Eskimos got into the whale boat and said good-bye, and *Erik* moved off to the south and civilization, giving three long blasts on her whistles as she went.

Whitney sat down in the boat and watched the ship go away until the last bit of smoke from the funnels dropped below the horizon. Here he was, the only white man among people of strange tongue and strange customs, and there was no escape for almost a whole year.

With the disappearance of the smoke Whitney came to the end of his introspection, started the motor, and soon was ashore with his new friends. They made camp, and he ate that night and soon was in a rope bed covered by muskox skins. He swore he never slept better in his life than he did that night.

There were reminders of the dangers of the north—he soon came upon three graves of explorers who had died in the pursuit of glory. But he did not falter. He learned to know his companions and to understand their language. He hunted and began work on a problem he learned about from his friends: The shack must be banked up with stones and gravel to be warm and safe during the winter, which was surely coming soon. His provisions had to be piled where they would be snug and dry. His boat had to be painted.

Whitney made a trip to Annootook, forty miles to the north, at that time the most northerly Eskimo settlement in the world.

Two of Whitney's good Eskimo friends were Sipsu and Kulutingua, whose wife, Tongwe, offered to make proper winter clothing for Whitney. He must have a parka of reindeerskin and trousers of bearskin to keep him warm in the snow and ice. While the three set forth for Annootook, she began the work. Already the temperature was dropping down below the freezing point.

The boat developed a leak, and they had to go ashore, soaking wet. They marched back to Etah in a dreadful storm, to discover that the hut was about to blow away in the wind. The roof had come loose, and the stove pipe blew off, and the fire went out. Exhausted, Whitney climbed into his sleeping bag and waited out the night.

Next day they repaired the roof in a raging gale, and piled more rocks and coal around the hut to keep it anchored. He had miscalculated before. He would not again.

He went up to Annootook a second time. He knew that Dr. Cook had built a shack up there and he hoped to use it. But it was full of filth. In order to use it he would have to take it down and rebuild it on another spot. And he did, deciding that he would want to make this his habitat, so as to be close to the two men from Peary's party: Bosun Murphy and a young seaman from Newfoundland named Billy Pritchard. The two white men helped Whitney build this second hut, and none too soon, for the very night it was finished the blasts of winter hit Annootook. The ice began moving southward faster and faster, and all night long as he lay in his furs he could hear the wind and tide driving the floes together with thunderous crashing and splintering noises.

The next few days were spent laying in a cache of supplies, then it was south to Etah, to check on his winter wardrobe. There he encountered a new danger of the north: His Eskimo friends had gone on a walrus hunt; Sipsu had harpooned a cow with a baby in tow. Three other walrus had been seen, and they had become infuriated had attacked the kayak and upset it. Sipsu had only been saved from the walruses by his friends, who drove the beasts off and pulled him and his ruined kayak out of the water and into the big boat that was with them. They had brought him back, bleeding, and Whitney now doctored his Eskimo friend, treating gashes on his face and tusk wounds in his hip. He used bichloride of mercury and bandages—he was afraid to sew up the wounds with his crude equipment. It was the end of September before Sipsu was up and about again.

In September they were beset by blizzards that prevented them from making the trip back to Annootook, where they would winter with the Eskimo colony. By boat and foot they finally made it through a storm, only to find that the roof had blown off the shack at Annootook and that it offered no protection against the storms and snow.

The next few days were spent in rebuilding the winter home, complete with a stone tunnel to protect the entrance and keep the snow out. As he was working—driving a few nails in the cold, then running inside to warm himself, and returning to the outside to drive more nails—the Eskimos were moving into their winter igloos, which here were made of stone. Soon the sea was frozen, and Whitney was learning to travel by dog sled. He was also becoming more adept each day in the language of his new friends.

But he made mistakes. He went out hunting before the sea was properly frozen and nearly fell into the water through the thin ice. Three dogs did go in and had to be hauled out. He discovered that he

was in no hurry; he would trust to the Eskimos and accompany them on their hunts. As long as he got a chance to go after muskox some time, it would be all right.

All the while he was observing and learning. He went hunting for hares—but they turned the color of the snow and he found none. He went fishing with the Eskimo boys, who found a pond, cut a hole through the ice (which was already 2 feet thick), and used an ivory lure in the form of a fish to attract big trout. When the trout came to investigate, the boys speared them.

The hours of daylight grew fewer. The long night was approaching fast. Whitney soon realized that he was not acclimated, and he began taking long walks every day to harden himself for the expeditions to come in the winter night. Still, he carried with him some of the germs of the white man, and he caught cold, had some days of suffering from a dreadfully sore throat, and wondered if it would turn to pneumonia. But it did not.

With the cold and the change, came a shortage of fresh meat. A party had been sent out on October 9 to hunt just before "real winter" set in. The party went toward Humboldt Glacier, 75 miles to the north. The hunters were gone so long that the villagers began to fear for them—and, worse, they ran out of meat and had to start killing dogs. To an Eskimo this was nothing less than slow suicide, for if the dogs were destroyed, the Eskimos would have no hunting companions or means of propulsion and they would surely perish before the winter ended.

The whole community became depressed. One woman had an attack of what the Eskimos called *problokto*—madness. She threw off all her clothes and jumped into a snowdrift, shouting and howling. And there were other incidents and much worry until the hunting party arrived safe and sound, with fully laden sledges. They had shot fourteen deer, six seals and five polar bears and they had brought Whitney a fine bearskin and some deer horns. The whole village erupted in joy.

The Eskimos soon planned another hunting trip to Humboldt Glacier and asked Whitney along. He assembled a sleeping bag of muskox hide, two changes of boots, three pairs of hareskin stockings, bearskin mitts with three pairs of lighter ones worn inside, and his bearskin pants and foxskin coat and deerskin parka. This was survival equipment in the cold and snow they would face—and Whitney was learning, as other whites would learn from the Eskimos, how to survive under the conditions the outsiders would claim were impossible.

The trip was hard—23 miles the first day in storm and bitter cold.

The night was colder, and Whitney arose in the morning so chilled that he ran up and down for fifteen minutes outside his tent in order to get his blood circulating properly.

And so they went on, through hardship Whitney had never dreamed of. But the Eskimos took it all in stride, dropping off (to die) those dogs that would not or could not pull.

How cold was it? Whitney's thermometer registered down only to 50 degrees below zero, and the mercury dropped to the bottom and stayed there. At night his tent was blown until it was covered with a crust of frost. He would awaken in the morning with nose and cheeks frozen, and so cold that his Eskimo companions would warm him by putting his shivering feet beneath their birdskin shirts.

The Eskimos shot two bears, but Whitney did not see a single bear on this trip.

They crossed the whole face of Humboldt Glacier before they decided to turn back to Annootook. The trip back was worse than that out, with a north wind that cut right through them as they traveled. They made Cape Scott and went on. Whitney's feet froze, and at the end of the day, the Eskimos pulled off his boots, thrust his feet under their shirts again, and rubbed them til the frost was gone. Then they told him to hurry and get his socks and boots back on, for even a little delay would mean his feet would swell so that he could not get his boots on—and then surely he would lose his feet and might lose his life.

That night his feet pained him. Next morning they hurt so badly he could not walk and had to sit on the sled, wrapped in deerskin, as they traveled on.

For two days they traveled thus, and he was so ill he could not even make entries in his journal. Then they reached Annootook, and he went to his hut, and his friends built a fire to warm it. His feet were so badly swollen that one boot could not be taken off and had to be cut away. Both feet were blistered and some flesh came off with the boot, but his toes were not injured, nor were his heels.

Thus ended the first hunt, with Whitney having gained a tremendous respect for his companions and for the environment in which they moved so surely. One of the first of the whites to undertake life with the Eskimos, he was learning very quickly.

For the Eskimos, born and bred in the environment, life was one thing. But for a white westerner—but recently digging gold in the hot fields of Australia and chasing cattle across the sunswept desert of Arizona—it was an unbelievable existence. It was a tribute to his fortitude and determination that Whitney survived those first few weeks of winter.

Returning from Humboldt Glacier, he had to remain in bed for several days. Toes, fingers, and nose had all been frozen, and his fingers were the last to recover properly. The Eskimos were helpful and they knew what to do. He had vaseline on his feet—they stripped it off and put on seal fat instead—and the feet grew much better quickly. The women came and fed him and spoiled him. One made him a pair of hareskin slippers. Tongwe came and looked at his feet and trimmed off the dead flesh with scissors. They watched him and made sure he stayed inside and rested.

In November he was well again, able to walk about the camp on tender feet. Now Whitney found that his stock of tea, coffee, and canned milk was running low, and this need coincided with the plans of the men to make a hunting trip to Etah. For Etah was the supply dump for Whitney. He would go along, he said—and he did, although his feet were still sore. He rode most of the way, but then they found hard going and he got off the sled and trudged down the steep hills, and then they ran into open water.

They made Etah safely, and an exhausted Whitney fell into the bed in his shack. He had scarcely closed his eyes, it seemed, when Kulutinguah, his hunter friend, announced that it was time to be up and about to hunt walrus and seal. And Whitney's hunter's instinct insisted that he go along.

On this trip he learned how to build an igloo of frozen snow, for they encountered high winds and had to stop for a rest. Had they not protected themselves they would have frozen. But in the snow house which was ten feet in diameter and went up in forty-five minutes, they were warm and cozy, with Whitney running his oil stove to cook his deer meat.

The Eskimos would taste his cooked meat, but they were used to eating frozen meats, too, and often they preferred it that way.

Whitney had a new education on the walrus hunt. He learned about crevasses, and how to hunt seal and walrus. His hunter friends killed several seals, which they ate raw in the igloo that night, preserving the entrails and refuse for the dogs. Whitney was so exhausted from the simple problems of travel and living that he rolled up in a skin and went to sleep, while the Eskimos went out again eagerly to hunt walrus. And after a few days, the sledges piled with meat for the women and children at home, they headed northward for Annootook.

Then began winter life in the igloo community of Annootook, and Whitney observed and learned about his hosts. He learned to hunt white hares in the snow. Kulutinguah taught him to trap foxes. He responded by sharing his supplies with them (they loved tea and

crackers) and doctoring them when they were sick, with the handful of remedies at his command.

There were more journeys. They went back to Etah for supplies and to hunt again. Whitney had thought, as did most Americans, that the Eskimos holed up in their winter quarters during the long night and waited out the winter, but he was learning that the hunters were out day or night, finding the food that the families and dogs needed to sustain life in this penetrating cold. He lived through storms. He very nearly suffocated when his stove pipe blew down one night and the hut filled with coal gas. He hurt his knee and was some time in recovering. He began to lose his hair, which he attributed to wearing his parka constantly and not to vitamin deficiency, for he did not know that the eating of raw meat gave the Eskimos many of their vitamins in winter, and he was eating nearly all cooked and preserved foods.

He took a trip to wild Cape Russell and learned how the Eskimos slept in snow holes when it was too hard to build an igloo. He learned when to abandon a hunting trip and how much endurance the dogs might have. (Sometimes the dogs went three days without food on a slow hunting trip.) He lived through a storm in Annootook so harsh that no Eskimos came out of their igloos, and when he ventured to visit Kulutinguah, his face froze before he could get in the tunnel.

He noted when the sun reached its lowest declination south, December 21, and he celebrated Christmas with a huge party in the hut. He gave each family some tins of provisions, and opened a tin of jam and other supplies given him by the Pearys. They played Eskimo games and laughed and ate. He made a cake, which turned out soggy, but the Eskimos loved it.

Soon it was New Year's, and a sad, homesick Whitney determined that he would celebrate it with a true feat. At half past ten in what would have been the morning anywhere else, he began his cooking. He roasted venison, and opened cranberry jelly for it. He opened canned corn. He boiled up a mess of macaroni. He made a rice pudding.

He could not serve all his Eskimo friends with what he could cook this day, so instead he asked the seaman and the bosun to join him, and they had a white man's feast.

New Year's Day marked a low point of Whitney's life in the frozen north. He went out after dinner, and found all the Eskimos were asleep, so he came back to the hut, alone, and considered his situation. He would be here now for 233 days before he could expect a vessel. On the departure of the *Erik* Whitney had made arrangements for a ship to be chartered in America to pick up him and his trophies in the summer. He rued the day he had decided on impulse to stay on in the Arctic. And

now, by force, he began to acclimitize himself in a way he had not before. The first step was to adopt the birdskin undershirt. He had resisted—just as he would not eat dog meat—but now he discovered in the first day that he never was cold again after he began wearing the birdskin shirt. And as for dogs as food—soon all the fresh meat in the settlement was exhausted and the old dogs were put to the knife. There came a dark period—no moon—and until it ended no man dared venture out to hunt lest he died on the trail.

As Whitney gained strength and endurance and adapted himself to the ways of Eskimo life, he had one stirring adventure after another, all of which he later chronicled in one of the earliest books written on life with the Eskimos, *Hunting with the Eskimo.* Through its pages one can see the hunter moving into the strange environment, resisting it, and learning step by step that the Eskimos had a reason for everything.

There were no studies to prove it, but Whitney properly guessed that his Eskimo friends were Mongolian in origin, and that all of them came from the same source. He began to study the languages and saw similarities in words among all kinds of Eskimo tribes.

On one hunting trip of astounding difficulty, he and his companions became marooned on an ice floe that seemed ready to be swept out to sea. They raced along the edge, watching the water widen between them and the shore for miles—with no luck. Finally they came to a point where the gap was narrow and it might be possible to jump from floe to floe and regain the shore. They did this, successfully, but they had to ferry the dogs across on one floe—for they would not trust the ice. One of the hunters was cast into the water when his floe broke. They stripped him and dried him and found him dry clothes. He ran up and down the ice to warm himself.

On this trip Whitney learned to hunt walrus, Eskimo style. They were successful. But he fell ill again with the white man's curse—a cold—and had to leave the party. On the way back to Etah Whitney was nearly killed on a wild sled ride when his sled capsized and the one behind came by, its runner missing his head by less than an inch as he lay unconscious in the snow.

One hunt followed another, and on each Whitney became more adept, more like his expert companions of the north. He became infested with lice—and accepted it as a part of the life.

It was a bad winter. The hunters who had left him behind when he was sick went on, but nearly died of exposure and found little to eat. The people of the settlement decided then to move south as the light came up, for they expected to find hunting better there than around

Annootook. And one by one the families pulled out to go south to Etah and beyond, in pursuit of seal and walrus.

The white men were then thrown more together. Whitney and Billy Pritchard began to feel the stirrings of day and the coming of spring. They went down to the water and dug out the whaleboat, which was heavily covered by snow. It was February 18. Still a long time to go. A few days went by, and Whitney began building a fishing rod. Spring fever was setting in.

Annootook was deserted. Whitney dared now to go hunting for hare and what he might find by himself. He fell on the return trip and hurt his left leg, so that for a time he could not walk on it. Back to camp he came to heal up again.

It continued cold, although every day the light grew brighter. He measured the temperature—34 degrees below zero—not what it had been in those dreadful blizzards of fall and winter, but too cold for comfort even now.

Other Eskimos came through their camp on the way to hunting territory, moving east or west or south, and so they had a stream of visitors, all complaining of what a hard winter it had been because of the storms and bad hunting. Then one day, the sun appeared as he was watching with Billy Pritchard.

They hoped that spring had indeed arrived—but this year proved to be completely unpredictable: The weather turned colder than ever, and the blizzards raged, keeping Whitney almost continually confined to his hut. The worst storm of all lasted twelve days, so cold and windy that a cup of water a little way from the stove froze solid in a few minutes. They nearly ran out of food—Whitney's fresh-meat supply fell to two legs of hare. He went out hunting, and in several days found only one hare, for with the storm, what little game was there seemed to have deserted them.

The Eskimos who had gone south had promised to keep a friendly eye on the foreigners, and they came from time to time bringing fresh meat. But after this storm they were much delayed, and Whitney really began to worry about his safety. Using all his skill, Whitney began hunting again. He shot a few ptarmigans. He ate a lot of beans and bacon.

Just after Easter, Bosun Murphy went off with some Eskimos to pick up supplies in the south. He returned with the word that the Eskimos were on a big hunting trip, and as soon as they found enough walrus to supply their families in their absence, they would come to Annootook and take Whitney off on the muskox hunt for which he had been waiting all year long.

Suddenly four Eskimos who had returned to the village with Murphy came rushing into the hut shouting that three men had been sighted, walking far to the northwest on the ice of Smith Sound. So unusual was the report—who would be walking, not sledging, about the Arctic at this time of year?—that Whitney rushed out too, and spotted the three moving black specks on the ice.

They went out by sledge and met the travelers. Whitney reported:

"Great was my astonishment when the white man introduced himself as Dr. Frederick A. Cook, whom we had come to believe had long since perished in the north. The two Eskimos were Ahwelah and Etukishuk, his sole companions during a long period of wandering. For nearly two years they had been cut off from all civilization—for the greater part of this period even from the companionship of Eskimos. For the first time in more than a year, Dr. Cook was enabled to converse in his native tongue, for his Eskimos spoke no English. He was as greatly astonished to meed a white man here as I was to meet him.

"The three men were sights to behold. Human beings could not have been more unkempt. They were half starved and very thin, terribly dirty, and Dr. Cook, like the Eskimos, had long hair reaching to his shoulders. For many many months they had been without dogs and had hauled a sledge a long distance from the southward. . . ."

The trip had been terrible and terrifying. Open water had prevented their taking a direct course across the sound north and west of the settlement, and they had to make a long detour north around the open sea. They ran into ice so rough that they could no longer pull the sledge and then had to abandon it and part of their equipment and supplies, but by this time they made course directly for Annootook, which they could see across the ice.

The Cook party was very lucky, for when the Eskimos went south to hunt and abandoned their usual winter settlement, if the white men had gone too, there might have been no one at Annootook to help these ragged half-starved men.

Dr. Cook was exhausted, and he rode on the sledge back to camp. The Eskimos recovered much more quickly, and in a few hours one of them had borrowed a team of dogs and gone out on the ice to pick up the abandoned sledge before the winds covered it with blowing snow.

Whitney began talking to the explorer, who was astounded that any man would winter over with the Eskimos just to hunt. When Whitney explained about his desire for muskox trophies, Dr. Cook took a map and pointed out several areas he had traversed in recent months. They had long, serious conversations about Cook's search for

the pole while Cook recuperated for a few days. Then Kulutinguah hitched up his sledge and took Dr. Cook off toward the Danish settlement at Upernavik, where he hoped to find a steamer that would take him back to civilization. After two long years in the frozen north, his expedition was ended.

Whitney accompanied them as far south as Etah, and there Cook picked up some supplies left months before by the steamer *Arctic*. The boxes were wrapped in old newspapers—months old, yet so great was the hunger for news from home that Whitney and Cook sat down and read every word of the old papers.

After Cook left, Whitney stayed on at Etah, absolutely alone for several days. The Eskimos had all gone off to a settlement at Nockme, where the hunting was better that year. But he no longer feared to be alone. He spent his days hunting and his evenings practicing cookery on the stove in the hut there.

Eskimo messengers announced that it was time for the great muskox hunt for which Whitney had been waiting all winter. Together they returned to Annootook and found a party of hunters there, six sledges in all, with the great hunter Eiseeyou in charge. They headed up Smith Sound on the thick ice, going to Ellesmere Land. They tried to turn inland at Victoria Head, but the ice was too rough, and there were many "sleeps," as the Eskimos estimated time and distance, before they came to a cache left by Dr. Cook, which they appropriated, knowing that the explorer was going home and would not need it. There was tea and coffee and cranberry sauce and chocolate and matches—all things that were more valuable than gold in this arctic land. And then on they went to Flagler Fjord, where the coming warmth of spring and summer had already melted away much of the snow, so the going was very rough. They made a cache there and left most of their equipment. Whitney dropped off his oil stoves and fuel. From now on he would live entirely like an Eskimo.

It grew hot—the temperature rose to 58 degrees above zero—and they began to sweat as they traveled. But as the discomfort increased and the travel grew more difficult, the enticements came: first was the sight of several old muskox heads, remains of a hunt of some time back. Whitney's heart began to quicken.

A few more sleeps—short marches of eight hours and long rests because of the difficulty—and they were in the country of the Oming-mong, the muskox. They were marching along the bed of a large river that was still frozen over, a river a mile wide with snow-covered mountains rising sharply on each side, and above Whitney could see the glaciers from Greenland's interior ice cap pushing down the

ravines. It was a bleak and barren land, where the muskox was king, where the lichen grew and sustained him when few other creatures could live at all.

They traveled on. They camped. Suddenly Eiseeyou called out. "Omingmong! Omingmong!"

And he pointed to two great boulders at the foot of a mountain half a mile away. Whitney peered, but he could not see anything but the boulders.

The Eskimos were excited. They started to pull out their guns, but Whitney stopped them. This, it had been agreed, was to be *his* hunt, and they would not shoot until he told them they might. They grumbled and complained, but they did as they had promised.

Three Eskimos each cut one dog loose from their sledge teams, and these dashed off to bring the muskoxen to bay, while the remaining dogs dragged sledges at a speed twice as fast as they had been going before.

They moved on toward the boulders where the muskoxen must be. Whitney hurried along with them, riding one sledge.

They came to a point fifty yards from the boulders—and then Whitney started. The boulders *were* the muskoxen, huge beasts whose protective color had fooled him. Now as the dogs approached and the Eskimos cut more dogs loose, they stood and waited. When a dog came charging up, a toss of those long lowered horns would catch him and fling him twenty feet in the air, to thump hurt or lifeless on the ground.

The muskoxen—two big bulls, Whitney now saw—backed up against a huge rock. They lowered their heads and charged out a few feet as the dogs approached. Then they backed to the boulder to protect their rear.

As far as dogs were concerned, Whitney could see, the bulls were virtually unapproachable. They were the most peculiar animals he had ever seen and in some ways the most impressive. Their long hair hung down and dragged in the snow, and their powerful horns were mounted in thick shaggy heads. They looked to be a cross between a bison and a mountain sheep, and very tough fighters.

They were adapted to their environment. They could fight off dogs or wolves or Eskimos armed spears, but they were no match for a high-powered rifle. Whitney could get close enough to take an easy shot. And he did. In a few minutes both bulls were stretched out. Two perfect shoulder shots had torn apart their hearts, leaving heads and skins intact for the trophies.

In a few hours the animals were skinned and the hunters were relaxing around the campfire, when one of the Eskimos who was

scouting found two more groups of muskoxen. This time Whitney decided to split his force, and let one group of four Eskimos follow one herd and take the animals, while he followed the larger herd with two other Eskimos.

They harnessed up the sledges and were off in a few minutes, fatigue and hunger forgotten in the excitement of the chase.

As they neared the herd, Whitney saw that several animals were lying down. It looked too easy. But then the other party began firing from a point out of sight, and Whitney's oxen leaped to their feet with incredible speed for such large animals. They charged up the steep mountainside toward safety. They were seeking the highest available land to make their stand.

The Eskimos cut all their dogs loose from the sledges, and the men gave chase. The dogs would surround the oxen and stop them—otherwise they might get away from the men because of their speed and agility on the rocky slopes.

The dogs had done that. They had attacked some calves and killed or wounded them, and then gone on to surround thirteen muskoxen who stood at bay, tails together, heads down, in defensive formation against a rock. As a dog attacked, a muskox stepped out of the herd, charged, and backed again into his place. Two dogs lay gored to death before them, and another was whimpering, badly wounded by those curved, terrible horns.

Whitney killed seven, and their bodies tumbled down the steep slope of the mountain, to fall hundreds of feet before they stopped. The other six animals broke and ran, seeking safety on the mountain. Eiseeyou went after them, and so did three dogs. But the rest of the dogs, half starved as Eskimo dogs nearly always were, headed down for the meat below, and Whitney watched helplessly as they tore at his hard-earned trophies.

He followed the Eskimo then, who brought the oxen to bay again, and Whitney felled the six. Immediately they began skinning them out, to save the meat for the Eskimos and their own use—and the skins and heads for Whitney.

But Eiseeyou had bad news. It would be nearly impossible to get meat or heads or skins down the mountain from the place where they had killed these animals.

Whitney insisted that they take at least the skins. They had to abandon the heavy heads—but the Eskimos made sure the meat was saved.

Some heads were also saved, some skins were recovered intact for Whitney's collection and for presentation to museums. Best of all, the Eskimos captured two suckling muskox calves that Whitney hoped

to bring home to present to one of the zoos. He had brought with him a supply of condensed milk, with just such an idea in view.

One sleep passed and then another. There were more muskoxen to be killed for Whitney and his Eskimos, until the sledges were fully laden with meat and hides and heads. The calves did well, although a constant guard had to be kept to protect them from dogs as ravenous and tricky as any wolf.

Whitney worried about getting the little animals back. He estimated that they were 150 miles from Annootook.

On the long trip down, one muskox calf wandered in among a bunch of dogs and was so badly bitten she had to be killed. Whitney cared for the other, actually carrying her in his arms when she tired and could not follow. She was willing to follow—they had lashed the mother's skin to the outside of a sledge, and the baby would follow that smell anywhere.

On the way home they were nearly lost when the ice on which they were traveling began to slip away to sea. Then the intense light brought snow blindness so bad that one driver stopped his sledge and lay down to die, until Whitney turned back to find him. For this Whitney was not the same man who had come up here almost a year before. He spoke the language; he knew the Eskimo customs, he lived like them now; and he was strong and able to carry his own weight in the hunting party. Indeed, he was leading it.

All the way he cared for the muskox calf—building shelters for her in a storm, carrying her in his arms when she grew exhausted. Yet still he did not save her. She grew weaker and weaker, and after one sleep he found her dead beside him.

But they had to move on—the arctic does not wait for any man, and the food must be taken home to the hungry families that waited in camp.

It was not long before they found other hunters who were also coming home from the north in triumph. Sipsu was there, and with him a friend who had captured a calf much bigger and stronger than the two that Whitney had found. So this calf was brought along.

By the time they reached Etah, they found that summer had descended. The Eskimo women had moved into skin tents while they were away. Now the white men would be coming back again. So Whitney's task was to wait, to clean and prepare his skins and trophies, and to amuse himself with bird catching and the gentle summer sports of the Eskimo. The hunting never stopped. But the hunting for birds was easy—only the summer hunting for seals and walrus was as dangerous as the winter work.

On June 22, two Eskimos arrived overland who had been with Peary on the *Roosevelt.* They had left the explorer three weeks earlier and they brought Whitney a letter, which announced that all was well.

The travelers reported having seen narwhal on their way down south, and the Eskimos jumped at the chance to hunt this big animal of the sea. Whitney went along on the difficult journey, taking sledges across soft and mushy ice. Sometimes he wished he had not. Each sleep he crawled aching into his sleeping bag and stayed there until rested. The Eskimos always waited—they knew the white man needed more rest than they, and they would not move until he signified his readiness to go.

Early in July they caught their narwhal, using Whitney's whaleboat and the kayaks in which the Eskimos invariably hunted in the summer sea. And they got one male, which had a trophy horn three feet long for Whitney to carry back to civilization. They had three animals in all, and the Eskimos would not hunt more. They did not need the meat and they would not waste an animal for a trophy, so the whaleboat was loaded up with the meat, and Whitney had his lonely horn, and they went back to Etah, again to wait, and for Whitney to occupy himself by helping the Eskimos hunt birds while he waited.

Bird hunting could be dangerous because of the treacherous weather. Time and again they headed out in the whaleboat for a bird cove and ran into a storm on the way, or en route home. Several times they nearly capsized. Whitney asked if it was always like this. Always, said the Eskimos. And were they not afraid? But they were not afraid. Eskimo life was one risk after another, and a narrow escape was no more than a minor adventure to them. They did not worry, they did not concern themselves with the past or the future. They lived everyday for itself.

While Whitney waited and observed and contemplated Eskimo life, Kulutinguah came back from escorting Dr. Cook to the Danish settlement down south. They had gone only as far as Tessevick, where Kulutinguah had put the explorer in the hands of a Danish storekeeper who spoke no English, while Dr. Cook spoke no Danish. And Kulutinguah was still laughing about the two white men who could not talk to each other. Eskimos never had that trouble, for the languages were so much alike.

Whitney waited and waited. The ship he had asked to come for him was supposed to arrive in midsummer, but August came, but no sign of the ship. The days grew cooler, and he could sense that this was going to be a short summer. The Eskimos confirmed it. Big storms would come soon, they announced, and they did. The first fall storm

arrived on August 14, and at the end of it eight inches of snow lay firmly on the ground, the temperature was down to 21 degrees Fahrenheit, and the change was there.

With that storm Whitney began to look anxiously out to sea each day for his ship.

No ship.

He had learned the patience of the north, and instead of fretting he went walrus hunting. On this trip he was treated to a sight seldom seen even by the Eskimos: the breaking up of a number of icebergs. Apparently caught between chilly surface temperature and a warm current, the icebergs suddenly split and turned over and went splashing away toward the south. It was magnificent, but dangerous, for the hunters never knew when a berg would break up, and the splashing could easily swamp the whaleboat. They avoided the big bergs, and hunted, and got their walrus, and went home.

Whitney had now given up on his own ship and he watched for the *Roosevelt*, which was supposed to bring Peary back this year.

On the eve of a hunting trip they were struck by winds of hurricane force, the boat was nearly torn from its lashings, and Whitney's sleeping bag, which had just been stowed, was whipped out and sent a long way up the valley. The trip was postponed, but only for hours—the Eskimos moved with nature and nature's harshness was quickly forgotten in their never ending search for food.

And so it went. A good day. A storm. A fair day. A hunt. A feast. The days piled one on top of the other and Whitney became numb and refused to think about the ship, until one day when he was looking out across the bay to see if it would be possible to go on a walrus hunt. It was rough, too rough, although the day was fine and clear. So he went back into the hills to walk and look for hares. He looked at his calendar before he left. It was August 28. He was fairly sure of this, although the long summer days and the difference in lengths of sleeps had made it hard to keep track. The Eskimos, who measured their time by such matters as the growth of the baby auks from egg to adult, told him it was not as late in the year as he thought. But a calendar did not lie. He believed the calendar. The calendar was wrong, said the Eskimos. "*Witch chiw omeak saw,*" they said. "By and by the ship will come."

Late—it was very late, and soon the ice would be closing in and he would be stuck for another winter, with so few provisions that he would even have to learn to eat dog meat.

So musing, Whitney went on his hare hunt, and when he was tired he came back and took a nap in his sleeping bag. Suddenly there was a

shout and a noise at the entrance to his hut, and Kulutinguah was there yelling his head off.

"Omeak saw," shouted the Eskimo. *"Omeak Saw!"*

So the ship *had* come!

In a moment Whitney was out of his bunk and crawling out of the long tunnel that made an igloo of his hut. What ship? His eyes strained at the glasses as he sought to recognize her. Was she the ship he had called from home?

No. As he watched and she came in sailing nicely, he saw that she was the *Roosevelt*—Admiral Peary's ship. He ran down to the harbor, Kulutinguah and other friends following, and spun the cord of the outboard, and started the whaleboat heading for the vessel. Soon they were alongside, and he was on deck, bearded, yellow, and thin, shaking the hands of all the men he knew. There was Admiral Peary, gruff and smiling. There was Captain Bartlett, pumping his hand.

"What day of the month is this?" asked Whitney—his very first question.

"August sixteenth," was the reply.

So Kulutinguah and the others had been right—in the north the calendar of the auk was better than the calendar of the Christians.

He told them then of that great joke on himself—it was easy to laugh now that the ship was here. And they gossiped and traded news and drank tea, and he learned of the death of one of his friends of the trip north, who had broken through thin ice and had drowned before he could be rescued.

For three days the *Roosevelt* remained at Etah, and Whitney loaded his supplies aboard her, for Peary agreed to take him home with them. They tore down the shack in which Whitney had lived a good part of the year and distributed everything movable to the Eskimos. Whitney gave away all his civilized possessions—things he could replace when he reached the southland. He took his trophies: the muskox horns, and the heads and the skins, and the bears and the walrus heads and tusks, and the narwhal tusk, and the warm clothes that the Eskimo women had made for him.

In that third day, *Roosevelt* got up steam, and late in the afternoon all the Eskimos except those going south to Whale Sound were left behind, waving as the ship's whistle blasted. The friends of a year stood on two high rocks above Etah camp and waved as long as they could see each other. And then as they moved into harbor the sails were set and the smokestack puffed harder and they were heading south, Whitney filled with mixed emotions, for those people back there on the rock had grown very close to him.

On August 23 They entered North Star Bay, and found there the *Jeanie,* under Captain Sam Bartlett of Brigus, Newfoundland, Whitney's old friend who had come to bring him home and was just then about to head up for Etah to get the hunter. And so Whitney joined the ship that had been sent for him and headed down into Baffin Bay. He hunted a little on the way south and took two bull walrus for their heads. Finally, after a brisk hunt on an ice floe, he shot his own bear. And soon enough they moved below the line of the icepack and down into Eglinton Fjord to Ravenseraig Harbor on the Tay River. There *Jeanie* anchored.

Whitney was still the sportsman. He hunted there for deer, and he fished for salmon, without luck. But he was not dismayed. The spirit that had remained staunch throughout that long and sometimes frightening winter night was not to be hurt by hunting failure again.

Jeanie was small enough to work the rivers. *Jeanie* was his for the charter, and he used her, going up stream to investigate and hunt, and moving slowly southward with the weather. They saw many a stranger now, the Canadian ship *Arctic* and any number of Eskimos, for this was inhabited territory. Whitney hunted and took more bear, and he fished more for salmon, and he traded for bearskins, for this was polar bear country and he saw many fine specimens.

As September came the icebergs threatened to hem them in, down around Cumberland Sound, en route to Cape Haven. There they rescued seven whites and an Eskimo who had been shipwrecked for *a whole year*—their vessel, the *Snowdrop,* having gone on the rocks on September 18, 1908. These men had survived a most terrible winter, sometimes eating nothing but boiled sealskin and rotten seal meat.

They said there was one more—a white man who had been left with the Eskimos at the head of Frobisher Bay. Whitney decided to search for the missing man. His feet had frozen, one foot had been amputated, and most of the toes of the other were gone. Thus he had been left behind to wait.

It was dangerous—the ice was closing in, the bay was uncharted, and they nearly went aground trying to take *Jeanie* in. So they abandoned that attempt and sent seven men in the power boat to try to make the rescue. They left on September 15 for Ward's Inlet at Frobisher Bay. In two days they were back. They had seen no trace of the Eskimos, who must have moved their camp and taken the white man with them. So the rescue was a failure for one, a success for seven.

Slowly, for Captain Brown of the *Snowdrop* hated to leave that last man, they headed south toward St. John's in Newfoundland, past Resolution Island and across Hudson Straits. The engine broke down and they sailed the rest of the way, on to Indian Harbor, where they

were held up by storms for two days, and then down into the safety of St. Johns landlocked harbor, where Whitney finally stepped ashore into civilization on the afternoon of September 28, 1909. For fourteen months he had been cut off. Now he was home, and that seemed to be the end of the story.

But it was not.

Up there in the arctic, when the half-starved Dr. Cook had straggled across the ice and into camp at Annootook, Whitney had questioned Dr. Cook about the success of his mission. Cook told him that he had reached the North Pole on April 20, 1908, following a route pioneered much earlier part of the way by Captain Otto Sverdrup. Cook had gone from Cape Sabine across Ellesmere land and north along the coast to the northern tip of Axel Heiberg Island. He had his papers on the sledge: his records and observations, and his chronological tables of distances.

Cook had wanted to break the news himself, so he had sworn Whitney to secrecy and Whitney had kept the secret.

When Whitney saw Peary on the *Roosevelt* that explorer claimed that he had reached the Pole on April 6, 1909, from Cape Columbia on the northern tip of Grant land where he had based.

So, in effect, Whitney was the first man in the world to know of the Peary-Cook controversy. And of such consequence was the promise to him, that he never once mentioned the matter in his own book. When Whitney headed south, he did make one statement in response to reporters' questions: that Dr. Cook had told him that Cook had discovered the pole. Then he remained quiet, and never again could be drawn into the argument, although all that year, certainly, and for many more months newspapermen and others tried to get him to give opinions and back one claim or the other.

For the next three summers Whitney hunted in the frozen north—Captain Bob Bartlett took him up—and it was not just for bear and walrus and muskox this time, although he brought back many live specimens for the Bronx Zoo. Whitney was hunting for a secret. In that series of conversations in the hut at Annootook, Dr. Cook had told Whitney that when the dogs were gone they had abandoned instruments and papers in a cache somewhere along that trail they had taken south from the pole. And Whitney's hunts now were across the windswept frozen snow and ice, to try to find that cache that would either support or disprove Dr. Cook's claim as against Peary's.

But in all those years, with all that experience, he never did find the cache, or if he did, he never revealed it to anyone before his death, at the age of sixty-two, in a Montreal hospital.

The controversy and the mystery of this adventurer remain.

V

The Modern Whitneys

In the twentieth century, one branch of the Whitney family produced a whole new variety of leaders in America; Will Whitney's children and grandchildren found themselves among the wealthiest people in the world. What these twentieth-century Whitneys did with their fortunes is a story as modern as the last quarter of the twentieth century.

V

The Modern Whitneys

9/ The Businessmen and Their Busy Wives

When William C. Whitney died, a few years after the turn of the twentieth century, the name Whitney was irrevocably associated with the Four Hundred of New York City and with the upper level of a capitalist society that was more wasteful, more profligate with every resource than any group in the world in its day. One would have to go back to the pre-revolutionary French court to see such waste, such casual commitment of millions to unworthy causes, such constant search for the unusual and for every amusement. The Whitneys did not invent this system. The elder Whitneys were not properly leaders of the society of the Mauve Decade, for when Flora failed to unseat Mrs. Astor because Mrs. Astor had control of the press, Flora allowed William to lead her away from the fountains of champagne, and more toward the world of art and music. The Whitneys, junior, cannot be blamed for turning to horses and country estates and yachts and parties to relieve the tedium. What, after all, does one do when one has so much money that there is nothing one cannot aspire to own, within "reason," and when work for its own sake has lost its glamor because there is no sense of direction?

This lack in the young Whitneys was really Will's fault. He was so busy with politics and later with making money that he never thought about giving his boys some goals; instead he gave them America on the halfshell.

Harry Payne Whitney was the first born of the children, and perhaps for that reason—because he grew up a boy before his father became really rich—he showed more of the old Whitney than of the new. He was born April 28, 1872, and if his father was busy with law practice and politics, he had plenty of masculine company as a baby and boy, because his Uncle Oliver Payne was a second father and did most of the things that fathers do.

Of course, Harry was spoiled. Mama Flora might not have had all the money in the world, but her millions and Uncle Oliver's were enough to buy a boy whatever he wanted. Harry began early going

back to Cleveland to visit Grandfather Payne and other relatives, and he moved into a rarified atmosphere there. Harry, with his long golden curls blowing, marched around the big house Grandfather let them use, and he played with the children of James A. Garfield, although Garfield was a Republican. But then, most of the rich friends of the Paynes in Cleveland were Republican.

Four years later, "Willie" came along. Later William Payne Whitney would change his name simply to Payne, and still later he would "disown" his father after his father's second marriage. He was obviously Mama's boy, and how Harry missed being so must simply have been one of those accidents of character, for Whitney continued to be far too busy to give them much attention.

While Harry was growing up, a young clergyman from Massachusetts by the name of Endicott Peabody was dreaming of a fine school he would start, to train the sons of the rich and powerful men of the nation. The idea was to prepare them for leadership. Thus Groton School was founded back in the hills of Massachusetts through the enterprise of men like J. P. Morgan, who sent J. P., Jr., there, although St. Paul's over in New Hampshire was the more noted school of the day. And Harry Payne Whitney went to Groton, in the 1880s, for his preliminary education. Of course he had been to school before—he had had tutors and he had traveled extensively around Europe—but now he was "away" at school. He seemed to prosper at Groton in spite of chill dormitories and cold-water washes.

In 1889 Payne Whitney came to join his brother, but the next autumn Harry went off to Yale, in spite of his father's opposition to Yale and the hope he would go to Harvard. Mother and Uncle Oliver decreed Yale, so Yale it was.

There Harry showed a streak of independence—he wrote poetry and became an editor of the Yale *Daily News*. Mother and Father worried about that—what if he should wish to follow the career of artist or writer, when there was so much property to be managed? For by 1890, when Harry went away, Will Whitney had reduced his active interest in politics and had turned to monopolizing the New York street railway system.

Old Will wanted Harry to follow in his footsteps as a corporation lawyer. In 1894, when Harry graduated from Yale, Whitney's street railway empire was nearly complete, but he had just been devastated by the death of Flora. The father and the eldest son drew together then in companionship. Harry decided he would study law, and there was no better place for it than Columbia University. But Harry had the same reaction to law school that his father had—he found it slow and tedious—and so he decided instead to enter the law firm of Elihu Root

and study by helping work up briefs and cases for the practicing attorneys. Will could hardly wait for Harry to complete his studies and enter the challenging world of corporate manipulation.

It never happened that way. The law simply was not for Harry Payne Whitney. He had no driving economic push to make him seek his living—he had millions at his disposal and every facility and toy a grown man could want. He was the social catch of the year 1896, certainly. And he was caught by no less of a demoiselle than Gertrude Vanderbilt, the daughter of the neighbors across the street in New York. There had been rounds of parties, the opera, young people's affairs at various townhouses, entertainments at Newport, where the Vanderbilt's $5 million Breakers was the most pretentious mansion. Finally from it all Gertrude had chosen Harry to take care of her and her portion of the Vanderbilt millions for the rest of her life. Harry was not so rich—Whitney was worth perhaps half as much as Cornelius Vanderbilt at that moment—but the Vanderbilts were impressed by Whitney's record in Washington.

The Vanderbilts on June 11 announced the engagement of Harry and Gertrude. The news was made by Mrs. Vanderbilt's social secretary, and the political and government connections of the Whitneys were prominently mentioned in the story. Actually Gertrude and Harry were receiving less attention than they deserved, because they had stepped into a virulent quarrel in the Vanderbilt family. For months young Cornelius (the son of Cornelius, who was the grandson of Cornelius the steamship and railroad magnate), had been courting a young lady named Grace Wilson. Grace came from a family of railroad barons from the south, but Grace had a reputation as flighty, and Alice Gwynne Vanderbilt, the chatelaine of all the Vanderbilts, had told Neily that he was not going to marry Grace under any circumstances; if he did so, he would be disinherited. In spite of that, on the day before Harry and Gertrude's engagement was announced, Grace Wilson's family announced her engagement, and the Vanderbilt household was in a furor. Father Vanderbilt was in his study sulking because his son had misbehaved so, for he had just called Neily back from pursuit of Grace in Europe a few weeks earlier. The whole Vanderbilt household went to Newport to get away from the publicity.

Young Cornelius Vanderbilt stayed on in New York, seeing his fiancée. Old Vanderbilt came to get him, and before the day was out, old Cornelius had a stroke. The papers said that the two Vanderbilt men had quarreled, that young Vanderbilt had struck his father, and that his father's rage had brought on the stroke. Whatever the truth, Neily moved out of the house. He married his girl against the wishes of every other Vanderbilt, and began a family feud that would extend

even to the Whitneys, when Harry married Gertrude with everybody's permission and best wishes.

The Vanderbilt-Whitney wedding was held in grand style at the Breakers in Newport, at the height of the season. For a week the porters and maids cleaned and scrubbed and painted. For two days before the wedding an army of florists and their assistants swarmed about the mansion. The ceremony would take place in the Gold Room, which Mrs. Vanderbilt always called the Grand Salon.

The room was so large that huge marble columns were inserted to give strength to the ceiling. Each pair of columns formed a little alcove and here large vases were filled to overflowing with lilies, Augusta Victoria roses, and *anchorist amazonica.* Bunches of orchids and other seldom-cut flowers were also vased up for the affair and put about at strategic spots. The mantle and the fireplace were banked with *faileyeusis* fern. A *prie dieu* of white sweetpeas and lilies of the valley was spread before the minister's place—here the happy couple would kneel in the floral bed to accept the blessings of the Episcopal minister who would marry them.

After the ceremony, the new Mr. and Mrs. Whitney adjourned to the Gray Room, to receive congratulations. The Gray Room was festooned with a canopy of foliage under which the young people stood, and the rest of the hall was filled with white and pink roses. The grand hall was decorated with cascades of asparagus and maiden hair fern, white lilies, and hydrangeas, pink and white roses, pink and white gladioli, and the windows were lined with ruffles of pink and white sweet peas and sprays of lilies of the valley, which cascaded down a dozen frames to the base, where roses were brought in to grow for the day.

And so, Gertrude Vanderbilt and Harry Payne Whitney were married, to live happily ever after.

By autumn they were back from the wedding trip and settling down to the new life of old married people. They had many important things to do, such as redecorate the mansion in New York, be sure that Harry's polo ponies were in good shape, consider the problems of maintaining a racing stable, and worry about yachts—how many and how big?

And—what should they do in the summers?

This was a poser. The Whitney tradition held for Bar Harbor or northwestern Massachusetts. William C. Whitney had always liked the Lenox area best and had bought up dozens of farms there to create a large wilderness tract that he proposed to leave that way. Will was not only a conservationist by nature but he was also farseeing; he could

multiply, and he'd figured out the childbearing habits of the American people. He had been around New York for a long time and had seen what was happening in this burgeoning city, so he decided that the Whitney heirs would have a place where they could escape the humdrum of crowded life no matter what. Whitney set up an 11,000-acre game preserve on October Mountain, which he stocked with deer, elk, moose, bison, pheasant, and quail. Young Harry was supposed to share in these delights, so Will gave a handsome house at Lenox to Harry and Gertrude.

Gertrude quickly decided that although Lenox was a nice place to visit she did not want to live there. Mama and Aunt Emily and Aunt Eliza and her uncles—most of them summered at Newport. She had grown up at Bailey's Beach and she was not going to trade all that for a game preserve full of deer.

And so in December of this very first year of wedded life, Harry Payne Whitney put out a quarter of a million dollars of Whitney-Payne money to buy the John Knower place on Newport's Bellevue Avenue and The Cliffs. It was within gunshot of the Breakers. Knower's was then the buy of the season. It had a lot of 130,000 square feet. It was joined by the property of Mrs. Herman Oelrichs on one side and Mrs. William Astor on the other, right in the middle of rich man's row, surrounded by gold and pretension—just what Gertrude had grown up with.

The Vanderbilts, who had maintained such an icy silence about the activities and plans of Cornelius Vanderbilt's namesake, unbent completely when the press asked the secretary for a comment about the Whitney activities. They were just delighted to have the children there, said Mrs. Vanderbilt. "You know, their cottage is quite near ours."

Whatever it took to turn a rich young man faced by every temptation in the world into a hardworker, the world said that Harry Payne Whitney did not have it. He had grown up in too much luxury and his taste seemed to run to horses and champagne, not to franchises and bond issues. That was not entirely the case. He and Gertrude had one attribute in common: They shared a love of the arts that had been quashed in Harry Payne Whitney by a family that wanted him to consider law and the business world. Gertrude's interests turned to sculpture and art patronage, and she became internationally famous for both. As for Harry Payne, he once held a public office: commissioner of municipal statistics for New York City. But even that strain became too great and he resigned after about a year.

Gertrude's interest in art developed some of America's finest treasures and helped immeasurably in moving the center of the world

of modern art from Paris to New York in the middle of the twentieth century.

At Brearley Day School in New York City, where she went as a girl, Gertrude showed early a flair for the arts. After school, she studied sculpture with Hendrik Andersen and James Fraser and took courses at the Art Students League. She was, in other words, far more than a dilettante. Over the next few years Gertrude worked at her art, before her marriage spending some months with Andrew O'Connor, a famous sculptor in Paris.

As for Harry, he hunted tigers in India and lions in Africa, and involved himself in many an activity. The list of the clubs he belonged to gives an idea as to his interests:

Automobile Club—that was a result of being bitten early by the auto craze. He joined several Vanderbilts and August Belmont in financing a racing road out on Long Island.

The Brook—this was a social club. Everybody who was anybody belonged to it.

Coaching—a club of its day. One of Whitney's Vanderbilt in-laws was its most important member.

Jockey—this was to become one of Harry Payne Whitney's real delights, just as it was his father's; it involved the race course.

Knickerbocker, University, Lawyers, Metropolitan, Whist, and Union—these were largely social clubs designed so that people of quality would not have to eat in common restaurants or entertain their friends in saloons. That is harsh judgment on the Union—which started out as a patriotic and semipolitical organization—but there it is.

Meadowbrook—a Long Island polo club limited to three hundred members, only about a third of whom ever played polo. Harry Payne was the leader of that third in his day.

New York Yacht—the old bastion of New York City's Forty-fourth street, a social club for yachtsmen, but far more than that, the defender of the America's cup, and the center of American yacht racing.

Polo Association—See Meadowbrook.

Racquet and Tennis—an exercise parlor for playboys, but also a serious club for the wielders of racquets, with special concern for court tennis, squash racquets, and other nearly lost arts.

Riding—a genteel club for ladies and gentlemen.

Restigouche Salmon—a fancy club for rich fishermen.

Royal Thames Yacht—The English cousin of New York Yacht.

Hurlingham—a British sporting, polo, and gentleman's club.

Turf and Field—his father's horse racing club.

Piping Rock—a pleasure club.

Westchester Racing Association—Like Meadowbrook for horsemen.

The list of Harry Payne Whitney's clubs tells more than just the fact that he was rich. He devoted as much time to several of these activities as other people did to making money. He was to become the leader of all American polo players, and where before his advent polo was a gentleman's preoccupation, he made his polo players work and learn how to play the best polo in the world. He made a job of it, just as he did with dog raising. He and his friend Herman B. Duryea bought a Kentucky hunting dog named Tony Boy for $1,500. At that moment, around the turn of the century, it was the highest price ever paid for a dog. But Whitney got enough publicity and acclaim out of that dog to make it worth it all, and he became a serious dog raiser whose animals won prizes in many shows and many trials.

Harry usually owned a yacht of some kind. One of the most famous of these was a big steam yacht called *The Warrior* that he bought from Frederick William Vanderbilt, one of his wife's uncles. And the most important yachting story of the young Whitney involved a bet with his uncle, Oliver Payne, the Standard Oil millionaire, who might then have been the richest man in the world.

It was at Newport in the summer of 1899, and everybody worth knowing was in town for the yacht racing season. They disported themselves at Bailey's Beach, and went to the Reading Room for entertainment, and to some one of a series of dinners every night.

Harry had a racing yacht that year. It was not of America's cup quality, quite, but it was fast. But this September day he was aboard P.A.B. Widener's *Josephine* with a party of friends when up came Uncle Oliver Payne in his *Amphitrite.* There was nothing for it but a race, and they started over the international course.

The boats crossed the starting line and came up close together as the skippers jockeyed for wind and position. Harry spotted his uncle and waved.

"I'll bet you five hundred that *Josephine* will win," he shouted over the short distance.

Oliver Payne grinned. Five hundred was less than a tip to a captain for him.

"Make it a thousand."

"If that's the way it is, make it fifteen hundred."

And so they kept going up, until the wager was settled just before *Amphitrite* pulled away in the breeze. That was lucky for Harry, because he might have kept on running up the ante. As it turned out, *Amphitrite* won handily and Harry, for his loud talk, was out $3,000.

Harry's big interest was not yachts, but the race track.

Since Harry's boyhood his father had been interested in race horses. First Will owned a stable in connection with Oliver Payne, but these were trotters. That was the period when the craze for trotting and pacing horses was at its peak among the New York rich. When Harry was a boy his father used to take him up to Goshen, New York, on the train, to see and drive the horses at Stony Ford, where they were boarded by Charles Bachman, one of the area's famous trotting trainers.

Will was a charter member of the Jockey Club when it was formed in 1894, but that was an accommodation to his friends—he was too busy to be involved in racing just then. The interest was there; years earlier Whitney had observed to Flora that there was something fascinating about "improving the breed"—but the traction struggles had come before that. In 1897 Whitney helped establish the Westchester Racing Association and soon brought Harry into it, for now that Harry was married it was the hope of the father that he would have a partner in the son. They owned the steeplechaser Shillelagh, who became national champion hunter and cross-country jumper.

This success pleased the Whitneys so that Will was ready to become more involved in racing. August Belmont was certainly persuasive, and so was a trainer-owner named John Madden, whose opinion Whitney respected. He was trying to slow down a little—the business world was demanding, and Harry seemed to like the idea too. Soon the Whitneys had their own silks: Eton blue with a brown cap. They used Tod Sloan, the famous jockey.

Two years after Harry's wedding, his father bought the whole stable owned by Samuel Hildreth. Two years later he bought a two-year-old colt named Jean Beraud, and a filly named Endurance. There were many other horses in the Whitney string by this time, but these were outstanding.

Harry and his father began winning races and purses. In 1898 the Whitneys won twenty-five races and nearly $40,000 in purses. The next year they won thirty-two races and earnings were up, and the Whitneys were totally fascinated by horse racing.

In 1902, Harry and his friend Herman Duryea bought a horse called Irish Lad, for whom they had great hopes. They supervised the training and went out to the track every moment they could spare. They entered the horse in the races at Sheepshead Bay, which at the time was the great track of the New York City area. Irish Lad won his first race and in so doing paid off the initial cost of purchase. Of course Harry had used his father's stables for housing and feeding, and the services of his father's extensive stud farm for training. That year the elder

Whitney's holdings on the track were valued at more than a million dollars in real estate and horseflesh.

So Irish Lad was a success. And a few days later the young men entered him in a race against a famous horse of the day named Clarion. Clarion was the favorite in this race, at even money, and Irish Lad was four to one, having had that first success. The race was run, and Irish Lad ran away with it. The boys bet a large sum with a local bookmaker and made a nice profit.

The season went along and Irish Lad was entered in the great race of the year for three-year-olds, the Tri-Stakes. Whitney, senior, had his horses ready, and Whitney, junior, had his one-horse stable. Up came race day, up came post time, up came the race—and Irish Lad won it going away. Harry had, in one short season with a one-horse stable, won more money on the track than his father with his million-dollar operation.

Harry Payne Whitney joined his father in business after his marriage. He was still the man about town in many ways, but he was also turning his hand to the matter of making money as well as spending it. William C. Whitney needed his son's help at this time, for the elder Whitney was then engaged in the fight of his life, for absolute control of the New York street railroad system.

For several years the Whitneys and their allies struggled with Henry Hart, the operator of the Third Avenue line, which stood between them and control of all but George Gould's elevated system. Hart became exhausted—emotionally, physically, and financially—and turned to a tricky financier named James R. Keene to support him. Keene lent Hart $4 million at a vital moment in 1899, when another of the Wall Street panics cut the value of all business shares. It was a measure of the stability and size of the Whitney fortune at this time that the Wall Street fluctuation did not disturb Will or Harry much. They did not change their style of living or of business; what was a capsizing wave to men in lesser boats was a little whitecap to the Whitneys.

These were the days when bears and bulls made fortunes by running stocks up and down on Wall Street, and Keene was known to be one of the most successful bears in the market.

Keene had twenty thousand shares of Hart's Third Avenue stock in hand and he threw it all on the market, driving the price down in a hurry. The idea was to get the price down to, say, ten percent of its value, then suddenly to buy up the shares cheap, and hold them while the concomitant scarcity drove the price back up. Since Keene only had twenty thousand shares of Third Avenue, he went further—he

"went short" many thousands of shares. That is to say, he established a price with a buyer who believed in Third Avenue stock and a date for delivery of the stock. It was his hope by "selling short," or without actually having the stock, that his twenty thousand shares and loss of confidence would drive the stock way down. He would then buy cheap, make the profit—the difference between the promised price and the asking price—deliver some and hold some of the stock as it went up.

Third Avenue dropped from the eighties down to fifty dollars a share and then dropped some more. The company was forced into receivership.

But then Thomas Fortune Ryan stepped in with his money, Will Whitney's money, and what little Harry Payne Whitney could put up, and Harry helped his father's favorite stock market operator "do Jim Keene the dirty."

Ryan began to buy swiftly, using agents set up for the purpose. Soon Ryan had cornered the shares on the open market. Then he let it be known that there were no shares.

Those short sellers *absolutely* had to have shares to meet their commitments on the due dates. That was one of the rules of the short game. And Keene discovered that all those short shares, all those promises to deliver, were held by Ryan and the Whitneys. So Keene could not give stock, and he had to pay up in cash at the going price of the stock. Keene lost about $5 million on the deal, and he would have lost more if Ryan had had his way, for Ryan wanted to wipe Keene out. But the Whitneys counseled moderation.

The fact was that the Whitneys, father and son, were moderate businessmen in a time when this asset of charity was rare.

The Whitneys were "good guys" in a capitalistic society loaded with "bad guys," and that is how the Whitneys became involved with the Guggenheims, who were usually tight and familyish about anything they did in the world of finance and business.

Will Whitney, as noted, had lucked into a fortune in the Tonopah mine of Nevada. He also became associated with Daniel Guggenheim, the son of old Meyer and the driving force for years in the Guggenheim enterprises.

At about the time that Will Whitney was doing well in the street railway wars, the Guggenheims were facing the challenge of their lives in the growing metals market of America. Old Meyer and his sons had made millions by buying and operating smelters in the United States and Mexico. In 1899 an old Rockefeller associate, Henry H. Rogers, joined with Leonard Lewisohn to try to force the Guggenheims out of business or to absorb them in one monster combine called American

Smelting and Refining Company. First Rogers got the copper kings together and formed Amalgamated Copper Company. That combine controlled a good part of the copper resources of the country. Then Rogers set out to take over the refineries, and combined all the resources except those of the Guggenheims, who refused to come in.

In the struggles that followed, Daniel Guggenheim and his brothers saw that they needed to assure themselves of a steady supply of minerals in order to keep their own refineries going. For the first time, then, they decided to take in some outside capital and some outside partners. They took in Will Whitney, who immediately assigned Harry to the task of managing the family interest in the new firm. It was called Guggenheim Exploration Company (Guggenex) and it was formed in June 1899. Besides Whitney, the company included King Edward VII of England, acting through his bankers, Cassel of London.

As ASARCO tried to sew up the metals business and make contracts with mining companies to secure their whole output, it became essential for the Guggenheims and Whitneys to go out and explore for ore. Daniel Guggenheim, who had grown up in the West, took young Harry Payne Whitney on as exciting a trip as a graduate of Groton had ever experienced. They went first by train to Denver, where the Guggenheims had held forth for many years and the smelter fortune was born. From there they went to Colorado Springs, and west into the mountains, and then across to Utah and down to Mexico. Daniel took Whitney by muleback and horseback and foot, and fed him beans and tortillas and pulque and tequila. It was a whole new world, this horizon of heavy-booted, bearded, hard-drinking miners that Harry saw.

For three years the Guggenheims and Whitney had been in exploration. They *had* to have metals to feed those smelters, and they were getting them. On this trip, Dan bought the Esperanza, a fine property next to the El Oro in Mexico. They got in touch with Spencer Penrose, younger brother of Boies Penrose, the Pennsylvania politician, and part owner of a huge copper mountain in Utah. They traveled rough and fast, and they came home after five lightning weeks with $10 million worth of silver, lead and copper mines in the West and Southwest that would make millions for Guggenheim Exploration. For a $6 million company—that was the capitalization—they were not doing badly. But Harry's heart was not really in it. What upset him most, and his family more, was that of all things Harry had missed the horse show!

Before Harry's father died in 1904 he had tried hard to bring to the

young man's consciousness all the old Puritan virtues of thrift and hard work, and to a certain extent he had succeeded. Henry continued to work with Guggenheim Exploration, and he became a company director.

He was a director of:

The Central Crosstown Railroad
The Cuba Company
The Fifth Avenue Trust Company
The Metropolitan Steamship Company (*His uncle's firm in Boston*)
The Morton Trust Company
The Mutual Life Insurance Company
The Nassau County Bank of Mineola
The National Bank of the United States
The National Bank of Commerce
The Western National Bank of the United States
The Clearwater and Racquette Lake Railroad
The Fulton Chain Railway Company
The Racquette Lake Railway Company
The Guaranty Trust Company
The New York Loan Improvement Company
The Newport Trust Company
The Plaza Bank
The New York Transportation Company
The Guggenheim Exploration Company
The Western Mining Company

One can see, then, where the Whitney money was these days—much of it in banks and bank stocks, and much of it in Guggenex, which was tremendously profitable because the Guggenheims provided a market for all the mining properties that Guggenex explored, bought, and capitalized.

Guggenheim Exploration stock went high and stayed there. It was listed on the exchange with a par value of 100, but after that successful Whitney-Guggenheim trip west, it rose to 200 and never fell below it. Harry and the Guggenheims were cautious. They kept the dividend at 7 percent, and they kept plenty of stock in reserve. The company began to be known as the bellwether of the mining companies, and it was the most valuable of them. In 1904 it was said around Wall Street that Guggenex owned nearly every promising piece of mining ground north of Tierra del Fuego.

In a way the setup was strictly Guggenheim, but Guggenex explored, under John Hays Hammond, the mining engineer, and found the ores. Then Guggenex financed the building of the mines. This was largely the sphere of Harry Whitney and his banking friends. (Examine

the number of his bank directorates.) Then, when the mine was operating, it might be sold to ASARCO, which by this time was in Guggenheim hands. That put the long-range profits very much in Guggenheim hands, but Whitney was content. He was making plenty for his pains, and he continued to make money in Canadian mines, Yukon gold, Utah copper, and half a dozen other directions. The story of Guggenex is more the story of John Hays Hammond and the Guggenheims than it is of the Whitneys, because by this time the Whitney interest was largely financial, and not adverturous. The company continued to make large profits for all concerned until 1916, when it was disbanded. Estimating its success, Whitney learned that on a total investment of $27,650,000 the exploration and development company had created *profits* of $97,171,000 in sixteen years, and the profits and assets were distributed. Whitney took his share in various ways, in copper company stock and others. Thus Harry's big-business adventure was a total success for the Whitneys.

Solomon Guggenheim once gave one of his nephews a fine piece of advice for a New York millionaire. Old Sol was a great fancier of girls, and when a man is lugging the evidence of $30 or $40 million around with him, it is odd how many young women could appear in his life in any given period.

"Never make love in the morning," he told the nephew. "You may get a better offer after lunch."

Harry Payne Whitney was not noted for his sharing of that particular view. In his bowler hat and conservative suits, that long Saxon face with its mouth turned down a bit at the corners, he was a good family man. But the basic principal—take it easy—was one that Harry learned early in life, and one that enabled him to pursue so many activities as he did for years.

Yachting, field trials, and polo occupied much of Harry's time, but horse racing occupied more than that. There was a reason. When William C. Whitney died in 1904 he left half his estate to Harry, 30 percent of it to Dorothy, and only 10 percent each to Payne and Pauline, who had quarreled with him over his second marriage. That quarrel had been resolved by Payne and Pauline's gravitating to their uncle's side and staying there.

With so much of the estate, Harry Whitney had a number of basic decisions to make, and among them was what to do with the horses. At the time of his death Will Whitney owned a breeding farm near Lexington, Kentucky, with a hundred brood mares and a number of stallions including the famous Hamburg, son of Hanover and Meddler, for which he had paid $60,000 a few months before. Whitney also had

forty horses in active training for races. All their entries into various spring and summer stake races were voided by the death of Whitney, and if Harry wanted to race this year he had to move fast. And, of course, he did want to race. For three years he had been at his father's side helping plan strategy, helping out at sales, learning the racing trade. They had won the Futurity in 1900 with Ballyhoo Bey, then the English Derby with Volodyovski. They had another try at the Derby in 1902 with Nasturtium, but did not win. But in 1903 they had done well, taking the Metropolitan Handicap at Morris Park with Gunfire; and then Harry had bested his father with Irish Lad, his own horse.

Not only were there horses in America to be seen to, but what was to be done with Heath House, the sporting estate in England that Whitney had leased?

That was the kind of decision that had to be made immediately. There was no point in keeping a raft of houses now that the senior Whitney was gone. And what a collection of real estate it was:

A Venetian palace in the Wheatley Hills near Jamaica, with 5,000 acres.

The Sheepshead Bay house, with its private race track and 300 acres of land.

The Berkshire Hills mansion at Lenox with 700 acres of land.

The October Mountain game farm with all its thousands of acres.

Stony Ford Farm in New York, Harry's old stamping grounds as a boy, which Whitney had bought in the last few years.

An Adirondacks game preserve of 16,000 acres.

A lodge at Blue Mountain Lake, with its own golf course.

The big horse farm outside Lexington with 3,000 acres.

The Aiken, South Carolina, estate with its big house and 2,000 acres of hunting land.

And finally, the big house at Sixty-eighth Street and Fifth Avenue, which was now valued at more than $2 million.

That last place was to be kept, so much was sure in the will. Dorothy, the baby born to Flora late in life, was only seventeen years old, and she was living at home with her father. The will provided for her to have the house until she grew up, and for her stepsister and stepbrother, Adelaide and Bertie Randolph, to live there for the next two years. Dorothy was to have $50,000 a year for her education, until she was grown, and her paid companion, Miss Beatrice Bend, was to be kept on to help with the decisions and the education.

Harry was overwhelmed with grief at his father's death and the details of his father's immense undertakings. The funeral was held at Grace Church downtown on Broadway, which was Will's church, and

the body was buried next to Flora in the family plot at Woodlawn Cemetery.

When the accountants were finished estimating, it became apparent that the keeping of a dozen estates, the racing of horses, and the maintenance of yachts was not the finest way to increase a fortune. For Whitney's estate, in relation to the amount that had passed through his hands, was not really that large. It came to about $21 million. There were virtually no taxes in those days—New York State took about 1 percent—and so Harry Payne Whitney ended with around $10 million plus the money he had made himself and other money settled on him by his father and by his Vanderbilt in-laws.

How well he would manage his wealth remained to be seen.

It was always easy to accuse the rich of engaging in playboy activities at the expense of business. The roustabouts and clerks and typists who so enviously read in the yellow press of the doings of the Four Hundred could sigh and know how they could bask on the sands of Bailey's Beach or skim across the water in a racing yawl if but they had been born with silver spoons in their mouths. And in the early years of the century, a major American amusement was following the didoes of the rich. The newspapers, knowing what boosted circulation, helped in every way they could, and in self-protection most wealthy families employed full-time secretaries who fended off press and public, for nearly every day some reporter was prying around.

In the summer it was easier for the press, for the wealthy congregated at the same watering holes: from the highly social and racy life at Newport to the intellectual and musical life at Lenox. And the Harry Payne Whitneys now alternated between these two centers.

The Lenox life, first in their cottage and then the big house left by Will, was in its way more interesting, if less notable, than the busy entertainment schedule at Newport. Sailing, lunching, tennis, drinking, and dining were the main activities at Newport. Music, art, golf, fishing, and hunting were the major activities at Lenox. The Lenox crowd, then, provided a less gaudy show for the public than the Newport bunch.

There were Cuttings and Pendeltons and Gardiners at Lenox, all around the golf course, to see if this year Carlos de Heredia would beat Sanford Barnes for the mugs given by S. Howland Robbins. Later in the season would come the September handicap, for which Mrs. Robert Fulton Cutting had donated a silver cup.

That was the golf crowd.

Then there was the fishing crowd. W. D. Sloane was a prominent

member of that group—and a good friend of the Whitneys for many years. He and Harry would split the cost of hauling in several hundred thousand trout every fall for the next spring's fishing. George Westinghouse was busy with his artificial lake, which he stocked with 50,000 bass a year.

And for those less rugged, there was coaching and horseback riding and bicycling, which came into favor in the 1890s and remained popular.

Or, if Harry tired of the simple life at Lenox and the round of pâté and champagne at Newport, he and Gertrude could always head for the Whitney place at Bar Harbor, which was frequented by the rich from many cities around the country. The McMillans of Detroit would be there, and the Ketterlinuses, and the Junkins, the Blois, and Clifts and Amorys, Ellises and Garlands and the Smiths of Philadelphia. These were not names well known to New York newspaper readers, and, if their owners had their way, they never would be. For the Bar Harbor crowd was strictly antisocial by the standards of Newport and even Lenox.

The Whitneys picked and chose. They were popular everywhere.

There was some slight estrangement between Harry and Payne and Pauline, following the decision of those two latter children to oppose their father's second marriage. There was also a definite coldness between these Whitneys and Cornelius Vanderbilt III and Grace Wilson Vanderbilt, largely because Gertrude always believed Neily's decision to marry Grace against the family's wishes brought about the untimely death of their father in 1899 at the age of fifty-six.

But there was plenty of room in society for all. And the Whitneys had their own special way of living that omitted some of the more lavish entertainments.

For a time Meadowbrook polo was Harry Payne Whitney's great love. Meadowbrook was the place he longed to be, and when he could be off from the world of business he headed out to Old Westbury to play with Reginald Brooks and Willard Roby and R. L. Beeckman and a dozen of the other good players of the time. Harry was the best, and Meadowbrook had been American polo headquarters since the late 1880s when the club was formed and took the laurels away from Newport.

Polo was a hard-driving game, as Harry found to his dismay one day at Meadowbrook in the spring of 1906. He was engaged in a club team match to gear up for the U.S. Open which his club had won steadily for the previous three years.

R.L. Beeckman, J.M. Waterbury, Jr., Robert Collier, and H.C.

Phipps were playing this day against Harry Whitney, Willard Roby, Reginald Brooks, and J.C. Phipps.

The Beeckman team was ahead in the second chukker by two goals, and Whitney's team was aroused to avenge. In the excitement the ball slipped under a horse and stopped and all the players headed for it, a general melee. Harry Whitney saw the ball ahead; he reached over and swung back to hit it clearly—and missed, just as Robert Collier turned toward the ball. The mallet went up in the air, and its slender round end caught Collier squarely in the eye, knocking out the eye and driving into Collier's head. He dropped like a stone. In a moment every man was off his horse, helping.

Collier's man was there with the car, and they rushed the stunned and injured player to the hospital, where he was cared for as best could be done. He survived, but there was no replacing the eye—that was the break of the game. And yet this dangerous and grueling sport vied with racing for Harry's interest for the rest of his life.

Around 1910 he had a fling at yachting. And the next year he went to Kiel in June for Kaiser Wilhelm's annual regatta week, taking over his sailing yacht *Bibelot* to enter the races and join the festivities. The annual regatta was European royalty's prime June entertainment.

This year the emperor staged his fifth annual yacht trials. Warships from half a dozen friendly countries lined the course. Rear Admiral Badger, with the Second Division of the Atlantic Fleet, represented the Americans. British admirals and French admirals and Dutch admirals were there in battleships and cruisers, and all of these dignitaries assembled at the imperial yacht club for the parties that were held every night during race week. Whitney and the other honored guests were invited aboard the emperor's yacht *Hohenzollern* for an informal dance, which meant they wore only white tie and tails and not court uniform.

On June 27 the committee staged a race from Kiel out to Eckernfoerde, and as was his custom the emperor entered in that race *Meteor*, the finest sailing vessel his designers had been able to construct. Wilhelm was a fierce competitor and he always liked to win his own regattas.

Also entered was the fast yacht *Germania*, owned by Leutnant zur See Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach. They and the English boat *Waterwitch* were the major competitors. It was a gusty, difficult race in the uncertain winds and the rough water of that day, but in the end the munitions king's boat beat his emperor's.

Next day *Meteor* had her revenge. She beat everybody in sight. But when the time allowances were calculated, it developed that the

emperor's *old* yacht, now renamed *Nordstern* (owned by Prof. C. Harries of Kiel), had beaten the new one cleanly in time.

The following day came the toughest race of all, the run back from Eckernfoerde to Kiel, with the current running against the boats and the choppy seas difficult to manage. The wind was again gusty and strong at times, so that several of the entries lost sails and two yachts lost spars.

The big event of the day was the Sönder class competition, and that was the class of Whitney's yacht, *Bibelot.* There were two other American entries, the *Beaver* and the *Cima*, and three German vessels, the *Tilly XIV*, the *Wannsee*, and the *Seehund III.*

They set off that overcast morning on a triangular course with those gusts chasing and punishing them. They had sailed it four days running, and this was the fifth day. *Bibelot* had taken two races, *Beaver* had taken one, and *Cima* had won the fourth. The contest was for three wins, and if Whitney could do it today, he had the cup.

Beaver was a sound, strong boat, and she sailed particularly well on tacks to windward. *Bibelot* was lighter, more airy, and her skipper was a real genius with the spinnaker, which gave that extra power on a reach or a run.

The wind seemed certain to favor *Beaver* this day, as they set out into the heavy sea. The wind was blowing at 25 knots as they moved onto the course, all boats heavily reefed.

Cima was the first boat to drop out of the race when she fell far behind the others at the end of the first rounding of the course. She came in, drooping.

The others sailed on, and on that last leg, *Beaver* turned downwind for the run home, so far ahead it seemed impossible that she could be beaten. She had eaten up yardage on those upwind tacks on the two legs.

But now the skipper of *Bibelot* had what he wanted, a straight downwind run to the finish line. The sails were let out, the spinnaker was put up in a jiffy, and it bellowed and snapped as the wind laced into the boat and she came rushing up, gaining yards every minute.

Bibelot caught *Beaver* before the finish line and passed her. By a full seven seconds she won the heat, the race, and the Emperor Wilhelm Cup, which was the honored prize of the regatta.

Next day Wilhelm and Prince Henry appeared at the yacht club to give out the prizes and attend the annual smoker. In spite of his annoyance at the poor showing of his German boats all week long, Wilhelm was geniality itself, and he stayed on far into the evening. The Whitneys were presented and spent some time with His Majesty.

Little did Wilhelm or Harry or Gertrude Whitney realize then, in

those warm and friendly surroundings, that four years later the war with England would be raging, and that Gertrude, in defiance of the German eagle's ambitions, would form, support, *and lead* a whole unit of the American Ambulance Hospital organized by Dr. Joseph Blake to help the allied cause against Wilhelm. She went over in 1914, full of wrath and vigor, and worked tirelessly for the wounded French and British boys who were brought into the hospital in Paris. Every day she was there, inspecting and helping with her own hands. She sailed home on the *Lusitania* for Christmas with the family, but then she was back again, on the *Franconia*, bringing a new supply of medicines and bandages to beleagured France.

Gertrude Whitney spent nearly all those war years in Paris and at hospitals behind the war front, organizing for the most part, but sometimes helping out in the wards when there was a shortage of nurses and attendants. She would try to come home for Christmas (at least until the U-boat menace grew deadly) but her visits home were brief, and always when she sailed again it was to be accompanied by all the bandages and medical supplies that the family fortune could afford.

They were richer than ever, these Whitneys. They were sportsmen and sometimes dilettantes. They had every possible device of pleasure at their fingertips and all the money and all the leisure in the world with which to indulge themselves. It was hardly to be expected that such princes of privilege would concern themselves with a war, but that was not the Whitney way. Gertrude did her part, and Harry did his in a much less visible fashion. He worked with the allies and the American purchasing services, putting his business interests—especially metals—at the service of first the western allies and then the American government. He and Gertrude subscribed heavily to war bonds and gave large amounts of money to various war relief agencies.

Gertrude Whitney's interest in France was not a pose in any way. After the war, Gertrude stayed on in Paris for a time, tidying up. And then when life settled down she continued to visit Paris regularly, to work with artists there and to improve her sculpting techniques.

Gertrude was by this time a "professional" artist. She created the Aztec Fountain at Pan-American Union building in Washington, and she had done the Titanic Memorial statue for that same city.

She sculpted the war memorial at 168th Street and Broadway in New York, and the El Dorado fountain for San Francisco. Harry grew interested in the Buffalo Bill Memorial in Cody, Wyoming, and put up some money for that museum, and she did the sculpture. There she was accused of a moment of artistic compromise—disgusted cowboys would say the pony on which Ol' Bill rode was not a shaggy Indian

pony, but a dainty-hocked polo pony. But Gertrude could be forgiven this lapse, if it was lapse. The Whitney mind was very much on polo in those years after the war, for until the middle 1920s Harry would lead the polo players of America along the route of study and improvement.

Gertrude's art included other works, spread from New York to Spain, among them the war memorial at St. Nazaire, France. Gertrude wrote on art, too, for the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and on the history of American art for *Arts & Decoration.* For the second magazine she was prophetic, discussing the coming end of America's apprenticeship in art to Europe. For Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney was a part of the surge of American art that would make New York its center in the years after World War II.

All the while that Gertrude was sculpting, she was trying to help young American artists, who were not notably well-to-do. For the most part Gertrude donated her artistic commissions to worthy causes. In 1908 she opened a studio on Eighth Street in Greenwich Village to exhibit young and unknown artists. Everyone respected her. She was rich but she was also serious about art. She was studying with Auguste Rodin and other sculptors to improve her own work, and she continued this study after the war upon her return to New York. By war's end Gertrude had bought the property adjoining her studio and converted the whole into a gallery she called the Whitney Studio. Again her devotion was to promising young artists on the American scene. These were days when the uptown galleries were featuring important work—mainly that meant foreign work, and certainly it did not mean much that was experimental or more imaginative than the then-accepted Impressionists. Cubism was hateful uptown, and there was no "American school" or anything much more avant-garde than Winslow Homer.

But as patrons began to drift in and out of the Whitney Studio, some of the young artists showing there found they had buyers for their art. It was slow to begin with. Gertrude and Juliana Force, her friend and art assistant, would see perhaps a hundred people a week from uptown or out of town, who came to view the paintings. That was not too encouraging, yet before Gertrude there had been nothing at all. And the young artists who climbed the stairs at 8 West Eighth Street often came down again with something they had never expected: it might be an invitation to go out on some Whitney property and paint; it might be a check that would keep the artist in a studio for a whole year.

Here, downtown, where Gertrude came to work on her own sculpture, she got to know such artists as John Sloan, Robert Henri,

and George Luks. She held parties for artists, where Childe Hassam held forth on the evils of European influence and Andrew O'Connor spoke blithely of his own influence on the young.

Soon the Eighth Street establishment was too small (with its two rooms) for exhibition, and Gertrude established the Whitney Studio Club on West Fourth Street. The announced purpose was to hold formal exhibits by young American artists.

Edward Hopper showed here—an Edward Hopper that no dealer had ever known. And there were scores of others in the years to come. The club soon outgrew itself.

Then came the move back to Eighth Street, to No. 14 and the beginnings of a museum atmosphere. Before Mrs. Force, Mrs. Whitney and a janitor, who doubled as doorman and jack of all trades, *were* the organization. At No. 14 they added Alexander Brook as director of the Whitney Galleries. Each year thereafter, "the Whitney" became better known, and its "graduates" began to sell and to trumpet the gallery's praises. Artists and buyers from abroad began tentatively to make this a port of call in New York.

As this began, Mrs. Force and others were moving about America, seeing art, meeting artists, buying paintings and other pieces of art. Soon the Whitneys had a collection. It was modest but it was growing. There was no regard for names. There was tremendous regard for taste and forcefulness. Mrs. Whitney and Mrs. Force were fearless. They were criticized and there were even sneers about some of their purchases, but they forged onward.

Who ever heard of George Bellows or William Zorach or Aaron Bohrod or Glenn O. Coleman? There was a time when no one had heard of them.

Finally four houses were put together to make the beginning of the collection and then the embryo of what would be the Whitney Museum. Gertrude gave up her studio at No. 8 West Eighth Street and made plans to hook No. 8 to No. 10, which was then a private house. She took over No. 12, where Daniel Chester French and Thomas Dewing had studios, and linked all with No. 14, the Gallery, to make the museum. That was the end of the beginning. The museum was founded because Mrs. Whitney and Mrs. Force felt that such exposure gave the artists more power than show in a gallery. That was the only real change. The basic concept of buying, supporting, encouraging young American artists did not fall by the wayside.

As the years went on, the Whitneys tended to divide their time more between the big house on Fifth Avenue which Harry had taken over after his father's death, and the estate at Westbury, Long Island.

In all, the Harry Payne Whitneys had three children, who grew up much as he and his brother and sisters had grown up, day schools and boarding schools, the Ivy League colleges, tennis, golf, riding, yachting, polo, hunting—anything they fancied for recreation.

In the 1920s Whitney was almost out of polo, after having led the polo teams for so long a time, including that great year 1909, when the team brought back the international cup from Europe and opened the new phase of polo in the United States.

Whitney was devoting an increasing amount of time to racing as he grew older and a little stiff for polo. He was particularly interested in Saratoga in upstate New York, which had been such a racing center during the great harness days of Commodore Vanderbilt and George Law. He shared his father's interest in music and musicians and sponsored some of the musical arts. He continued to help run the affairs of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

In the 1920s Whitney horses were winning at Pimlico; they won the Preakness and that greatest of all modern American events, the Kentucky Derby. (Who remembers Regret?) By 1924 the Whitney stables had come to total 200 thoroughbreds and they came in winners in 272 races, second place in 201 and showed in 235 events; their winnings of $500,000 were the highest of any American stable.

Harry Payne Whitney was a more aggressive businessman than most people gave him credit for. As times changed, so did he. Guggenheim Exploration Company went out of business, absorbed by other Guggenheim properties. Whitney invested heavily in Canadian and other mining companies on his own, and he became deeply involved in petroleum investment. He bought 155,000 shares of Mammoth Oil Company, and then, early in 1920, he bought a big block of stock in Sinclair Oil Company.

In 1922 Whitney invested further in Sinclair, and the year 1924 brought a call to appear before the Senate's committee on public lands, which was investigating the Tea Pot Dome, the Secretary of Interior, the Secretary of the Navy, and Harry F. Sinclair's whole petroleum empire. Whitney rode the train down to Washington, appeared before the gentlemen of the Senate, and testified that he had invested in Sinclair, just the way he invested in various Standard Oil companies and their subsidiaries.

"I am a businessman," he said. "I put money into these companies as an investment."

It was a businessman's statement. The morality of Sinclair was not a consideration. Harry Whitney used his money shrewdly and taught his children to be good business people too.

The Mauve Decade had come and gone. The Whitney fortune had

never really been dissipated in the manner of some of those other fortunes by (1) too many children or (2) too much extravagance. It was true that Will Whitney had spent much money on real estate—he had ten houses when he died. But each of those houses was a valuable piece of property as well as a showplace, and Whitney owned thousands and thousands of acres of land which increased in real value every time another baby was born in the United States to raise the population. The Whitney land investments were more than luxury—quite unlike the yachts and $5 million cottages and tremendous splurges in jewels and pearls of the Vanderbilts, or the obscenely wasteful parties of the Astors and others, at Newport and in their New York mansions.

The Whitneys, as a family, were always good businessmen, and as a family they were always close.

The quarrel in the Vanderbilt family never was healed, but the quarrel in the Whitney family was healed by money in a short time. It had been a real quarrel—the fact that William Payne Whitney dropped the William out of his name altogether is an indication—and when Will died and left half his estate to Harry Payne Whitney and only a tenth each to the two dissident children it might have seemed that a feud was in the making. It was not that. Will Whitney was merely saddened by his children's desertion of him in those last years. He could even understand it—the turning away because of the love of their mother, the irrepressible Flora. But there was another reason for their turning that Will understood even more completely, practical man that he was. Uncle Oliver Payne was one of the richest men in the world, he was a bachelor, and he would make Payne Whitney and Pauline his heirs if they would do his bidding. Oliver developed into an old crank, he hated his former brother-in-law, and there was no reason in the world that the youngsters would lose out. So when Will Whitney made his last testament, everybody knew that he was going to leave the bulk of his estate to Harry and Dorothy and only enough to Payne and Pauline to get them by until they could share in Uncle Oliver's holdings. Payne and Pauline each received around $2 million from the estate.

In the middle of the 1890s, when Will Whitney turned to horse racing and focussed his interest on the English Derby, he took the family often to London. There Pauline met young Almeric Hugh Paget, son of Lord Alfred Paget. The son was a bit down on the old family luck, and had a job as manager in St. Paul, Minnesota (of all places), of the London & Northwest American Mortgage Company. Soon there was a wedding in New York, at St. Thomas's Episcopal Church. The newspapers, which were often wrong, said the wedding cost a million dollars—and that might have been true if they counted

the gifts and marriage portion bestowed by Will on his daughter (this was before the estrangement).

In this liaison, Pauline apparently brought from all sources—her mother's estate, her father's gift, and her rich uncle's present—some $4 million to refurbish the escutcheon of the Pagets in England. Pauline managed well with her money, and before she died in England her estate was valued at $15 million. All of it went to her husband.

She also left a pair of heiresses, Olive and Dorothy, who turned out to be cutups in the most outrageous sense of the transatlantic world of heirs and heiresses. Paget was made a peer after he came into all that money, and Lady Olive and Lady Dorothy grew up strewing orchids and primroses along their paths of life. Olive married an army captain named Charles Winn, who was the son of Lord Oswald. She divorced Winn in 1926 and married Arthur Wilson-Filmer, who took her to historic Leeds castle for a honeymoon. She had bought the castle, with its fifty bathrooms, and put in steam heat and electricity. Luckily she had money. But the money did not preserve the marriage. Five years later she was divorced again and this time married Sir Adrian Baillie, a British diplomat.

In the depression years Olive was particularly notable because of her unrestrained spending habits. She went to the most fashionable shops. She patronized an Egyptian doctor who gave her exotic medicines for exotic diseases. She welcomed the press and loved to give interviews. She was a handsome woman, and the press loved her dearly, and her didoes more, for she gambled wildly at Monte Carlo, and went on picnics, where the reporters swore she was accompanied by four footmen in livery carrying hampers piled with roast partridges, Melton Mowbray pie, plovers' eggs, wild boar meat, and magnums of champagne.

Sister Dorothy spent her money on race horses, which was more in the Whitney tradition. In the mid 1930s, when the coal miners were freezing in Wales, Dorothy conducted a spirited quarrel with the Aga Khan over who should get possession of a particular yearling colt. She paid $25,000, which was a record at the time. Later she paid $75,000 for another yearling at another auction, which was another record in 1936.

The girls' father, Pauline's husband, Almeric Paget, became Lord Queensborough, and shortly after Pauline's death he married again and had three more children, thus taking his inherited share of the Whitney money out of the family.

And after 1917, when Oliver Payne died, Olive and Dorothy Paget received reinfusions of American millions from their great uncle's estate, but those, too, were dissipated into the British Isles.

When Dorothy Whitney grew up in the big mansion at 871 Fifth Avenue, she was an exceptionally pretty girl, and she could have had any of the millionaire set she wanted. But Dorothy chose Willard Straight, the son of a China missionary, who was employed by the House of Morgan and later became consul in the Far East. The marriage was performed in 1911 and lasted until Straight died in Paris just after the end of World War I, leaving three children: Willard Whitney Straight, Beatrice Straight, and Michael Straight. They grew up in the proper schools and proper atmosphere.

That proper atmosphere was English, too, for Dorothy married Leonard Elmhirst, an Englishman whose father had been a friend of and associate of Rabindranath Tagore, the literary and philosophical figure of India. She took the children to England to live in a medieval house and they established a school for English youth with the Whitney money. The other children grew up and became British but Michael Straight came back to America and was long associated with the *New Republic* magazine.

So went the Whitney and the Payne fortunes, except for one portion—the inhertance of Payne Whitney, who became crotchety Uncle Oliver's principal heir.

How large was Oliver Payne's fortune, anyhow?

Some said it was $100 million. Others said it was $40 million, and the appraised value by the state was $32 million.

Whatever it was, it was enough.

Payne Whitney in 1917 suddenly became one of the richest men in the world, inheriting from his uncle at least five or six times as much money as Harry did from their father.

And what had Payne been doing all these years between birth and Groton and the coming into the big fortune?

For one, he had gone to Yale, as most Whitneys did, and he had distinguished himself as an oarsman. Big, rangy, with that typical long Whitney face and grace, he was captain of the college crew and nationally famous for his sport. He rowed at Poughkeepsie and on the Thames, and at Henley when the Americans went there for the regatta in 1896.

At Yale, Whitney was known as a "good fellow" who was always "available" for a loan. What was not known until many years later was that when some of his classmates fell into financial difficulties in the uncertain U.S. economy of the late 1890s, Whitney made loans large enough to permit them to complete their studies at Yale when otherwise they would have had to drop out.

At school, Whitney's roommate was Adelbert Hay, the son of

John Hay, who was Secretary of State for Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Whitney then went on to take law at Harvard, although his career as businessman and sporting figure was already cut out for him by the examples of his father and brother.

Out of college, Payne Whitney married Helen Hay, his roommate's sister, at a splendid wedding in Washington (President Roosevelt was there), and brought her to live in a Fifth Avenue mansion, as was typical of Whitneys of this generation.

Payne Whitney then followed the pattern of his family in other regards, except for the quarrel with his father over the second marriage. He set up an office on Wall Street and managed his comparatively slender fortune there, until his uncle died, leaving Payne half his fortune and making him possibly the richest man in the United States. These things are relative: at one time by one measurement Commodore Vanderbilt was richest, having more money (in Wall Street values of the day and in government bonds) than the government had. But values on Wall Street have always been largely illusory; the test of a great fortune was still that in spite of the ups and downs of the market the position of the magnate would not be disrupted; he could shift his holdings about to take maximum advantage of conditions without losing control of any valued property or changing his way of life. The Whitney fortunes of the 1900s met these criteria.

In the years after Oliver Payne's death, many a millionaire died, leaving big sums. Frank Woolworth passed out of the world with $30 million for his heirs; Joseph DeLamar left $32 million. James Stillman, the banker, left $40 million, and Frederick G. Bourne left $42 million. Always the "values" went upward as the nation expanded and American money inflated slowly but steadily. When William L. Harkness died, for example, he left $54 million. But in the twenties, when Anna Harkness died, she left over a $100 million. That was the way the big fortunes were going—simply left alone they would double in ten years.

And that is what happened to the money left by Oliver Payne, under Payne Whitney's management. From the office at 14 Wall Street, he moved his millions about on the financial chessboard, but gently. The Payne fortune came from Standard Oil investment originally, so it was fitting that the biggest single part of Payne Whitney's money was invested in various Standard Oil company securities; around $80 million. Other oil company holdings brought that aspect of investment up to well over a $100 million. What was not generally known was that Payne Whitney was one of the big holders of tobacco stocks; he had $23 million tied up in British-American Tobacco, and

$15 million in Liggett and Myers. Altogether his tobacco stocks were worth well over $50 million.

By the middle of the 1920s the Whitney properties were worth somewhere around $200 million on the then current market, representing shrewd investment and good luck by the genial Payne Whitney. As in the old days Payne Whitney was an easy touch for his friends and business acquaintances, who had notes with him for around a million and three quarters dollars. Whether or not the money was repaid did not seem to bother him overmuch; Philip Boyer, a constant house guest at the Whitneys, owed Payne $650,000!

Payne Whitney was the most retiring of men. No one knew much about his business affairs. Even less did he show off as a philanthropist, although he gave away many millions of dollars. He was prominently identified with Great Northern Paper and the First National Bank and Whitney Realty, although these were among his lesser holdings.

Payne did not share his father's and his brother's interest in land as an investment, nor was he vitally interested in minerals. Why should he be—he had never been subject to the blandishments of that charmer John Hays Hammond, nor had he gone tramping across the country with a Guggenheim. His big land holdings were a country estate at Manhasset, Long Island, and a house at 972 Fifth Avenue. He also owned a house at Saratoga, largely because of his interest in racing. But the days of old Will with his ten mansions were long gone in the 1920s.

Payne, like Harry Payne, was associated with the race track, but not in quite the same manner as Harry. Harry was competitor all the way. After his father died, and the estate was settled partly by selling off the race horses at an auction in Madison Square Garden, Harry bought most of the old Whitney string in open bidding, and spent a million dollars in the process. But Payne was interested in improving the sport, rather than just the breed, and he became a director of the Saratoga Racing Association and a steward of the Jockey Club. Orderly—that's what he was. Sometimes it seemed that he kept his race horses just so he would have official standing. He did not seem vitally concerned whether they won or lost.

This Whitney was a shadowy character, preferring obscurity to a life in which he was overpowered by his brother's image—the similarity of names sometimes confused even the gossip columnists. So when in 1924 the name of Payne Whitney popped up as the third highest payer of income taxes (first was Henry Ford and second was John D. Rockefeller, Jr.), outside the financial community America did not

know what to make of it. Payne paid $2 million in taxes that year.

At about this time Payne decided he could relax a bit. He was nearly fifty years old and most of those years had been spent working hard. He had so few horses even Damon Runyon would forget his racing colors. But he went to England in 1925 and bought St. Germaine, a fine stallion, from Lord Astor, paying a high price. He stayed over for the Newmarket sales, and bought several expensive mares, including Crispina, for whom he paid $40,000. He brought them down to Georgia and began the long, hard process of setting up a stud farm at Greenwood Plantation in Thomasville. Then he went in with Joseph Widener, of Philadelphia, to buy the John Hughes estate in Kentucky and set that up for horse breeding.

Payne Whitney's benefices now became a little more obvious. He gave $2 million for the resuscitation of the New York Public Library system. He supported New York Hospital for a time. He was a big giver to Bloomingdale Asylum, and he added millions to the endowment of Yale University.

The Whitneys had two children, and after the usual Whitney type of education, Joan married Charles Shipman Payson and went to live in Portland, Maine. John Hay Whitney, commonly known as Jock, was a college boy in the mid-twenties, studying at Oxford University in England, and playing polo. After a busy family life, the Payne Whitneys were settling down, and Payne spent more time at the Manhasset place than he had before.

In the spring of 1927 he was busy with his newfound interest in horse breeding and went down south for a few weeks. He was in attendance at Churchill Downs on Derby Day, and then he went to the breeding farm in Georgia.

Back in New York, Whitney began to suffer from little attacks of what he called indigestion. His answer was to spend less time in the city and get more exercise, and he played a good deal of tennis on the family courts at the Manhasset estate. On the twenty-sixth day of May, the Boyers were staying at the house, and Philip Boyer, Jr., and Whitney went just after lunch to the indoor tennis court for a game. They began to play, but then Whitney complained that the indigestion was bothering him again, and he retired to the lounge off the court to lie down on a couch. Philip got his mother quickly, and they called Dr. L. A. Van Kleeck, the family physician, who came hurrying to the house. He saw that Whitney had suffered a heart attack, and he administered medicine then and there to try to control it.

Mrs. Boyer was on the phone already, getting Helen Hay Whitney from the Colony Club where she was lunching that day. She dropped her fork, took the call, and immediately left the table to head

for her car. On the city street she saw a policeman on a motorcycle, and told the driver to get his attention. They stopped. She told the policeman of her urgency, and when he discovered that the lady was Mrs. Whitney and that her husband was terribly ill, stricken by some kind of attack, the policeman turned on his siren and led her all the way out to Manhasset as fast as the Rolls would go. They made the run from midtown Manhattan to Manhasset in just thirty minutes, but by the time the car stopped and Helen hurried into the house, Payne Whitney had died.

The flags were lowered at Belmont Park and at Churchill Downs that day. All the Whitney (Helen's mostly) horses were withdrawn from their races. An air of quiet and sadness came down over the whole racing community. Whiskery, the Harry Whitney winner of the Derby, and Valrous, both entered for the Withers Stakes, were taken off the list that day. Even Harry Payne Whitney's horses were withdrawn as a sign of respect to Harry's brother.

The funeral was held at Christ Church, Manhasset, and most of the family tried to get there. There was no longer ill feeling between Payne and his relatives—there really had not been any, except for the quarrel with their father. And to prove it, Payne left the big new stallion he had acquired in England to his brother, Harry.

It was only when the will was made public that America learned just how wealthy Payne Whitney really was, for his was the largest estate ever settled in America.

How times were changing! A few years after the death of Payne Whitney, the apostolic organ of American business, *Fortune*, noted one vital development in American society (that strange concatenation once known as the Four Hundred): the changed status of women.

The Whitney women, said *Fortune*, were remarkable in that they had always been as prominent, as newsworthy, and as active in affairs as had the Whitney men. It was true. When Payne Whitney married, he chose the daughter of a Secretary of State. When Harry married, he chose the most civilized of the Vanderbilts. Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in the 1920s was moving ever more to build her interest in developing American art, and she was succeeding. Helen Hay was a poet of considerable standing, as well as First Lady of the American Turf, for while Payne had only recently taken much interest in breeding horses, Helen had been racing them since the early days.

It was only three years between the day that Payne died and the day that Harry Payne Whitney followed his brother to the grave.

In 1930 Harry was still a young man, only fifty-eight. In his case there was at least a civilized warning. In October the family went out to

Old Westbury for a weekend at the country place, and Harry came down with a cold. He returned to the city on Monday morning and went to the office as usual, tending to the affairs of his mining companies and his multifarious investments. The fortune was now up around $65 million—quite an increase from the $10 million that was left him, and a fine tribute to Harry's management of money and affairs.

On Tuesday the cold continued to hang on, and he went to the doctor. But on Wednesday it was worse, and so he went home to the big house at 871 Fifth Avenue and went to bed. The servants called the doctor to come and see him, and the doctor called Dr. John A. Hartwell, the president of the Academy of Medicine, to come and consult. Dr. Hartwell did not like what he saw, and he called in others. Pneumonia—that they could agree upon. Mr. Whitney must stay in bed and take plenty of fluids and get rest. That was the basic treatment for pneumonia before sulfa drugs and antibiotics.

Whitney stayed in bed on Thursday and Friday, but the pneumonia grew worse and soon he was running a high fever. He did not respond to oxygen very well, or to other treatment. The family was called and told that the case was severe.

In came the three children: Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney and his two sisters, Mrs. G. Maccullough Miller and Mrs. Barklie McKee Henry, with their husbands. They stayed at the house Saturday and Sunday, and then on Sunday evening Harry Payne Whitney died.

The officials valued the estate at $62 million (it was probably considerably more). It was left largely in trust for the children and grandchildren—that was the modern way of handling these great fortunes. Trusts avoided loss through spendthrift children (like the Paget girls in England) and avoided debilitation through the ministrations of the tax collectors and lawyers. By keeping the family affairs in trusts, it was possible to maintain such tremendously valuable properties as the Whitney Real Estate Corporation, which owned the Berkshire lands and most of that valuable property that William C. Whitney had purchased back when land was cheap. In this way, all the family's land holdings could be kept in a family corporation in which all Whitneys shared, and the hunting preserves and big houses could be retained for general family use without their becoming a burden on any one member of the family. These were different times, and the Whitneys were adjusting well to the new ways of preserving and enhancing fortune.

Gertrude received all the real estate in Nassau County and the houses they actually lived in and the personal effects, although Whitney foresaw what was happening in New York and put in his will a

clause that stipulated the destruction of 871 Fifth Avenue after Gertrude was finished with it. Such multimillion-dollar palaces were becoming unmanageable and uneconomical in the increase in New York City values and taxes and the high price of help.

Gertrude inherited a valuable art collection among the personal possessions, with many Van Dycks, Lawrences, Turners, Manets, and Reynoldses. The most precious of them was a Van Dyck portrait of Sir William Villiers, which was valued by the art appraisers at $60,000. It does not sound like much in the 1970s, but in 1930 a corporation president could get along very nicely on $20,000 a year, and a practicing physician might consider himself lucky to be making $10,000.

When Gertrude recovered from the shock of her husband's death, she threw herself even more vigorously into the art world, which was her principal release. But there was one other major distraction in this period: the custody fight for little Gloria Vanderbilt, the daughter of Gertrude's brother, Reginald, and his wife, Gloria Morgan.

Reginald Claypool Vanderbilt died in 1925, and his widow inherited trust in what little wealth he had (about $5 million) and custody of their daughter. Gloria Morgan was a gay spirit, as Reggie had been. They had lived reckless and highly alcoholic lives at Newport and on the Continent during the Prohibition era, and Gloria saw no reason to give up the high life after Reggie died. She simply sought new companions. In 1934 her way of living brought her into court in a custody suit that was to determine the future of little Gloria. Big Gloria's mother testified that Gloria became engaged to Prince Gottfried zu Hohenlohe after the death of Reggie, but that Hohenlohe had been her lover before she was married and during the time she was married. The prince, said Mrs. Morgan, was after the Vanderbilt money in trust for big Gloria's welfare and little Gloria's future. The prince and Gloria spent much time at Biarritz, and once at a weekend in the country aroused the whole household with a quarrel, so that servants and others came in to find them *en deshabille* together.

A discharged and embittered butler said that big Gloria used to give wild parties at her New York townhouse and that one night he saw her and other guests wandering around in the buff with champagne glasses in their hands.

A discharged and also embittered chauffeur testified that big Gloria used to come into New York quite often and put up overnight at the Mamaroneck house of A. C. Blumenthal, a crony of Mayor Jimmy Walker and proprietor of a speak-easy.

An ex-maid testified that one night she came into Gloria's bedroom to turn down the beds, and found Gloria, dressed in very little, in

passionate embrace with *Lady* Milford-Haven, a handsome young member of the British aristocracy.

The custody fight went on for months, with rafts of testimony that showed the lives of the very rich as being bound only slightly by convention. Who and how many you slept with seemed to depend on how much money you had—and big Gloria was made out by the courts to be the freest of the free. In the end, the scandalous testimony caused the court to turn little Gloria's future over to her Aunt Gertrude.

Much more positive was the matter of art. If Gertrude was criticized for her sculpture sometimes—and she was; and if Gertrude was criticized for the art she and her associates bought for the Whitney Gallery—and she was; still she never quit her effort to encourage and improve the caliber of American art. She must be given much of the credit for the efforts that were made in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Of course there were other forces at work—the most important of them being Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision to put art on the government payroll with the Public Works Artists Program, a WPA art program that produced fine paintings for the post offices and other federal buildings and encouraged many young artists to keep going at a time when they might otherwise have been starved out of their careers. (Mrs. Force was regional director of PWAP as well as a Whitney director.) In the 1970s the post office art was just being rediscovered and assembled by the General Services Administration. Millions of dollars' worth of this art was lost, destroyed, or given away by foolish men of government service in the years between. Some of it found its way into the Whitney Museum, and some of those same "government artists" of the 1930s became the fine painters, highly acclaimed, of the 1950s. The Museum of Modern Art and other institutions must not be underestimated in this regard, but neither should Gertrude Whitney; her interest was not a rich woman's fad. It would not be long before the Knoedler Gallery would honor her by giving her a one-woman show of her sculpture, and if the Knoedler people did so more as a gesture, and slightly apologetically, still the gesture was deserved.

In 1931 Gertrude opened the glass and tile doors of a pink building on Eighth Street, the new museum. Five years later the museum was undertaking ever more ambitious projects, with exhibitions of sculpture and drawings and prints for a month or so, and then a whole new show of water colors and pastels by American artists. That was what the museum was all about: in 1936, Americans and those foreigners who painted American subjects were encouraged to exhibit, and that year Gertrude devoted $20,000 to the purchase of works from the exhibition for the permanent collection.

By this time the world was taking "the Whitney" seriously—after many years of disdain.

"The Museum would seem to be thoroughly justified in believing that the show just opened represents in a broad way the most notable characteristics of American sculpture and graphic arts today." Those were the words of New York *Times* critic Edward Alden Jewell. He went, he saw, and he found the show interesting and varied.

As the Whitney drew serious attention, so it aroused argument, and the quarrel brought by some from the Museum of Modern Art and others was that the Whitney could not be good and representational because Mrs. Whitney and Mrs. Force were too involved with what they did. It was too personal, and too many friends of theirs were bound to get their art shown. Yet even the controversy that swirled about the Whitney Museum in the late 1930s was helpful and stimulated interest in American art.

The controversy came to an end temporarily in the spring of 1942 when Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney died. That brought a turning point in the whole story. For a few years before her death, Gertrude lived in austere and splendid isolation in the townhouse and the Westbury estate. When she was gone, things began to happen in a hurry.

Harry's will had provided for the razing of the house on her death. Within a month the old place was being cleared out, with a sale of tapestries, furniture and paintings. The Metropolitan Museum of Art bought drapes and hangings, and a fifeenth-century Italian painting and sixteenth-century Fontainebleau tapestries. The Cleveland Museum bought Louis XV furniture and eighteenth-century Beauvais tapestries. The Philadelphia Art Museum and the Chicago Art Institute made purchases, and the Worcester Museum bought a series of Brussels Renaissance tapestries for $42,000. Altogether the furniture and art brought more than $295,000.

By autumn of that year the wreckers were moving in on the mansion at sixty-eighth Street. Only one room was to be preserved: the grand ballroom that William Whitney had ordered for his second wife, with its forty-five-foot ceiling, oak woodwork, ornamental bronzes and mirrors, for the Whitneys had given that whole room to the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.

Now what was to be done with the Whitney Museum? Over the years Gertrude had spent wisely, for the most part, for the collection of two thousand objects was valued at over half a million dollars. The paintings by Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, John LaFarge, and Albert P. Ryder would make it valuable. Less well known were the Walt Kuhns, and the John Stuart Currys and the Guy Pene du Bois paintings.

Flora Whitney Miller, was now president of the Whitney Museum and she decided that it would be turned over to the Metropolitan Museum. Gertrude had tried to keep her museum going, giving $2.5 million in her will for the purpose, but apparently some of the Whitney heirs, at least, did not want to be bothered with the management of such an enterprise. The Metropolitan proposed to erect a Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney Wing instead. Mrs. Force was to be kept on (at least for a time) as the advisory director to the trustees.

And while these discussions went on, the museum opened a memorial exhibition of Gertrude's sculpture, on the understanding that such was the end. The museum would then close its doors and the art would be moved uptown.

But the transaction never came off.

The reason for the failure was buried deep in the American art controversy, and the crotchets of the Metropolitan Museum.

For many years Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney had ofttimes wondered if she was on the right track and if she was doing things the way they should be done in the best interest of art. In 1929 came the depression, and with it concerns about the future. Mrs. Whitney had sent Mrs. Force up to the Metropolitan Museum then with the suggestion that she would be willing to turn over the five hundred works of art collected thus far and provide capital for their housing and care and the acquisition of more paintings, even though Mrs. Whitney and Mrs. Force regarded the Metropolitan's attitude toward contemporary art as something less than modern.

Mrs. Force sat down in the director's office and made the offer.

The director looked up from his desk.

"My dear lady," he said. "What would we do with them? We already have a basement full of that kind of painting."

Mrs. Force was a lady of violent red hair and a temper to match, and she left the office precipitately and sought Mrs. Whitney. Together they went to see Forbes Watson, critic of the New York *Herald Tribune* and editor of *Arts* magazine—and the whole offer was dropped.

Then, in 1942, the question came up once again, and out of the discussion between Mrs. Miller and the directors and trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art came an unwritten agreement. The Metropolitan would take over the Whitney, and Mrs. Force and her staff would become the Metropolitan's authorities on modern art. A new wing of the Metropolitan would be built (where the parking lot now stands) and the Met's Americana collection, the Historica

Americana collection, and the Whitney collection would all be housed there. Mrs. Force would then use the money set aside in the past for the Metropolitan's building and furnishing and acquisitions.

The year 1942 was hardly the time to talk about building unless you were talking futures, for every ounce of steel was going into the war and nothing was left over for modern art. So the pleasant talks and considerations continued between Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Force on the one hand and Francis Henry Taylor and the trustees for the Met on the other. It was really all settled—not by contract, to be sure—but no one questioned the outcome.

Mrs. Force then acted as advisor to the Metropolitan. She assisted in the purchase of paintings. She saw much of her advice disregarded by a conservative Metropolitan management.

Mrs. Force died and was succeeded by Herman Moore as Whitney Museum director. Still the time for building had not arrived. Then came 1948, when materials and money had loosened up considerably and the nation was booming. One night two representatives from the Metropolitan and two representatives from the Museum of Modern Art met with Associate Director Lloyd Goodrich and another representative of the Whitney in a private dinner at the Brook Club. The object was to stimulate the art world: They would not compete but would fortify one another in the future.

All went well until the dessert. Then they began discussing standards of art, and modern art in particular. The people from the Metropolitan looked down at both the other museums.

"We're not sure we want the kind of people who come to your museums," they said, indicating that the public that visited the Museum of Modern Art consisted of unwashed characters in dirty shirts and soiled blouses, and that the clientele of the Whitney was considerably less pristine. "Some of them were probably communists. And as for the art. . . ."

The discussion ceased. The argument began, with the representatives of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney lined up on the one side and the two from the Met on the other.

At the Brook arguments do not end up in fisticuffs as a rule and this one did not, but the men from the Modern and the Whitney both left at two o'clock with ruffled feathers, high blood pressure, and much to think about.

"What are we doing?" they said to each other, as they contemplated the future, and particularly the future of modern art in America.

When Lloyd Goodrich sorted his mind out and made sure that he was not just emoting, he went to see Mrs. Miller.

She heard and agreed. The unwritten agreement with the Metropolitan Museum came to a sudden, brittle end. Mrs. Miller did not make a public scene—that was not the Whitney way—but she and her associates began to make plans of their own for the movement and expansion of the Whitney Museum in the future. They all realized how narrowly they had missed sacrificing everything that Gertrude Whitney had worked for during most of her life.

The Whitney women were all workers. Just as Gertrude had devoted herself to art, so her sister-in-law devoted herself to her great intellectual loves in life.

In the 1940s one might have expected that Mrs. Payne Whitney would be a lonely woman, living in the city and at Greentree, the big estate at Manhasset on Long Island. For had the world not passed her by? Payne was dead. Harry was dead. Most of the people she had known well were gone—Teddy Roosevelt and her own family and all the rest. Her children were married and had lives of their own. But so did this remarkable, resilient woman, who for very good reason was known as First Lady of the Turf. For all one had to do was see her sitting in her box at Churchill Downs or any of half a dozen other tracks, big handbag draped carelessly over the seat, straw hat on the center of her head, tweed suit jacket open, and field glasses around her neck, to sense that here was a lady who knew precisely what she was about. And if she was waiting, she was waiting for something important to happen.

She was amused by the world that rushed on around her.

"Nine people out of ten think I am dead," she said to a reporter one day, not bitterly, but amused by a world that hastened so headlong nowhere.

As for her own life, it had been remarkably serene, since the early days, when in her poetry she wrote:

> The Romany is gone, he had
> taken all my kisses,
> I knew I could not keep him so I
> laughed and let him go.
> I will find my life serene, I will
> wed a pleasant lover,
> I may think no more of perfume
> and the lingering on the lane,
> I will rear me sturdy children
> and my soul I will discover,
> For I will not love a Romany in
> all this world again.

Whatever girlhood memory her poem limns, she set out to live her life thus, and she did so. She and Gertrude were friends—in 1907 she inscribed her book of verses, *Gypsy Verses*, to Gertrude "because she is my friend." She got on well with Harry and with her nieces and nephews, and she was a firm but intelligent mother, raising her young in an unusual tradition for American millionaires—the tradition of social responsibility. Before Helen's marriage and in the early years she wrote books of poems for adults and books of poems for children. Around 1910 she was the favorite of the girls' school set, romantic poems were much in vogue and hers were *vers de société* for certain. But then the children took more time, and when she emerged from child care to look around her, the race track beckoned with all its challenge and glitter and excitement.

Unlike the Astor and Vanderbilt women, this Mrs. Whitney carefully avoided the press for years. She was shy but marvelously self-contained and efficient (after Payne's death she managed her own affairs). But above all she was First Lady of the Turf. Unlike Harry, who used to back his own horses heavily, his sister-in-law never bet on the races. She was a breeder and she said she did her gambling when she bought a horse. She bought many and bred many, and Twenty Grand and Shutout—Derby winners—were two of them. For thirty years at any race meet the pink and black meant high quality horseflesh. But in the years of World War II, Helen Hay Whitney waned. Her eyes grew dim and she stopped going to races. There was no point in going when you could not see the horses after they rounded the turn and went into the backstretch.

This Mrs. Whitney died in 1944, leaving an estate of $6 million of her own. Of course that in no way represented the Whitney wealth, for Payne's millions had been distributed among the children and other relatives and put in various trusts for the future. The big house at Manhasset and its surrounding outbuildings and lands made up a good part of her estate—this property was left to the children, John Hay Whitney and Joan Whitney Payson. They received most of the estate, with some specific gifts being given to grandchildren and other relatives, and a collection of cookbooks worth $8,000 going to the New York Public Library.

She had about $4 million worth of stocks, bonds, and mortgages, and another million and a half in miscellaneous assets and cash. But as for the kind of things that made a show—big name art and $35,000 Persian rugs, the trappings of conspicuous wealth—there really was not much of it. The Whitneys had gone through this phase—William with his "biggest private ballroom" in New York—but they were past it. Times had changed a great deal.

10/ The Modern Millionaires

Like a kingdom, a fortune is hard to hold together when the founder dies. Harry Payne Whitney and Payne Whitney, the sons of Will Whitney, inherited so much money from their father and Uncle Oliver Payne that they were possibly the richest men in New York except for the Rockefellers. Yet after two generations of good fortune, the needs of the Whitney families were so great that when these men died, one could see how a fortune might be dissipated in two or three generations.

Payne Whitney died in 1927; his brother Harry in 1930. Both fortunes were left in trust—the modern manner of preventing the heirs from exerting their worst proclivities—and Harry's fortune was settled up first.

After bequests, which totaled $5 million, the estate was cut into four equal parts. Harry's son, Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, received one part, or about $15 million, plus the $2 million cash bequest. The other three parts would be set up in trust during the lives of his son and two daughters, and eventually would go to the grandchildren.

Whitney affairs now became complicated, a lawyer's dream. One daughter, Flora, had first married Roderick Tower, divorced him, and then married G. Maccullough Miller. She had three children: Whitney Tower, Pamela Tower, and Flora Miller. Flora had more or less succeeded her mother as principal of the Whitney Museum.

The second daughter, Mrs. Barklie McKee Henry, had two children: Barklie Henry and Gertrude Henry. And Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney then had two children: Harry Payne Whitney II and Nancy Whitney. More children would come along, all of them to have a share of the Harry Payne Whitney money, and to keep newspaper columnists and society editors busy for years trying to separate and keep track of the people involved.

Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, unlike his father and grandfather, was born when the family was really rich. Grandfather William C's family had not been rich, and when Harry Payne was born Will was

still more politician, government servant, and lawyer than rich man. So this third generation represented something new, a danger point to inherited wealth, as the story of the Vanderbilts and the disintegration of Vanderbilt and Gould family fortunes showed. What would Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney do with the wealth—in total about $20 million? And what had been his background when, at thirty-one he stood at his father's deathbed?

First, except for the $2 million he received outright, he would do nothing with the wealth for four years. Harry Payne Whitney had never been close to his children, so it was nothing personal, but Harry Payne Whitney had a look at the wastrels in his society, and he did what he could to prevent Sonny, as the young man was known, from squandering his birthright. Sonny was not to have his money until he was thirty-five years old.

Sonny was the name tagged on this young man by the gossip columnists—and he disliked it as much as if he had been called Junior. He was to himself C.V. Whitney, or Cornelius, yet there was something about his long Saxon face, clear features, and kinky hair that made women in particular want to call him Sonny.

C.V. was used to knocks from the family, for he had been taking them for years in a way that would hardly impress a steelworker's son, but seemed harsh to the children of other millionaires.

C.V. was born in his Aunt Dorothy's house at Roslyn, Long Island, and spent his early years shepherded by governesses and other instructors. His happiest times were spent in the country houses of his grandfather on Long Island and at Lenox.

He went to Groton. He learned to play the piano, not quite as a steelworker's son would learn; Whitney was taught by the celebrated Josef Hofmann, who was a friend of the family's. In the musical tradition of the Whitneys, Sonny learned to play quite well. Thereafter he practiced almost daily, and in later years, again in the tradition of the family, this Whitney and his children would form a musical ensemble. It was not quite like that of the William Dwight Whitneys of Northampton, with piano and strings—it was of its age: piano and guitar, clarinet, drums and saxophone, knocking out a little jazz.

In the Groton years under Endicott Peabody, Whitney learned to take his knocks in sports; it was part of the educational process to make every boy play a sport every season, and to do his best in that sport. The education "took" in that sense; Whitney became a fine athlete with good coordination, and later played on two national champion polo teams.

In the spring of 1917 Whitney graduated from Groton just after the United States entered World War I. His family life consisted

largely of reading about his parents in the society columns and going home to whichever of the family mansions they seemed to be frequenting at the moment, there to engage in whatever activities were being supervised either by other relatives or paid help. It is not recorded that Harry Payne ever stopped his whirlwind of activity long enough to have a man-to-man talk with his son.

Consequently it was no great wrench from the family in the spring of 1917 when C.V. decided that he would join the colors. His mother gave her permission. Why would she not? She was home from her own hospital activity in France only once in a while and it seemed perfectly normal that Sonny should fight the war if he felt like it. So C.V. joined the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps when he was eighteen and learned to fly.

C.V. Whitney was a successful flier. He was transferred from Signal Corps activity to the flight instruction program at a Texas airfield. He took 100 minutes instruction in the morning, and soloed after lunch. Not long afterward he was transferred to the new Army Air Corps, and in 1918 was commissioned a second lieutenant and sent to Carruthers Field, Texas. Of course what he wanted to do was go to France and shoot down Germans, but what the army wanted him to do was to train other young men.

Whitney swallowed the disappointment with the good temper of a young man disciplined by the Rev. Dr. Peabody for five years. He soon became the field's chief instructor in advanced acrobatic and combat flying, which involved teaching young men to do Immelmanns and inside loops and speed turns and sideslips, and to keep the backs of their necks away from the enemy. He was a good instructor, and the youngest in the whole U.S. Army Air Corps. Finally he managed a transfer to a combat outfit, and was just getting ready to go overseas when the armistice was signed.

Whitney stayed on in the Air Corps for a few months, leaving flying as wistfully as did many another young man. But the war over, there seemed little future in aviation, and there was the family tradition of Yale and noblesse oblige. So Whitney resigned his commission and enrolled at Yale College.

The Yale career was something less than a whole success. In a biography issued by his public relations man Ted Ramsay some twenty years later, the whole of the four years is dismissed in less than a sentence: "... resigned to enroll in Yale, where he rowed on the crew for two years."

The Yale years started out well enough. But remember, here was a young man of nineteen who had been an officer in the army, with adult responsibility and adult treatment, and he was suddenly a "fresh-

man'' of the class of 1922. It was a hard transition, and he had as much difficulty with it as the next fellow—more, because he had all the money he wanted to spend, and he traveled in a dazzling society. The Four Hundred were falling apart, and Café Society was not yet formalized but the parties were no less happy because they were bathtub gin and illegal champagne affairs. New York's wealthy partied in speak-easies, and at such spas as the Waldorf Astoria and the Ritz.

There one night at a ball given by Mrs. William Kissam Vanderbilt, Jr., Whitney met a former Ziegfeld Follies girl. She was married, but that did not seem to make much difference, and soon she was out and about with Whitney. It was a fast life, but it was not Whitney's only life at Yale. He rowed on the freshman crew in his first year, and he rowed on the varsity crews for the next two years. He liked to be called Whit, but when the scandals began breaking, the papers dubbed him Sonny, and the name stuck for years.

He really was not the Sonny type. He went tramping in the woods of Maine and the mountains of Canada, and spent one summer on the south coast of Alaska sailing with his cousin Douglas Burden.

Back at Yale he took up with his Ziegfeld girl again, and wrote articles for the *Yale Literary Magazine*. He had his ''Y'' for rowing, and in his senior year he was a member of Psi Upsilon, a national fraternity, and captain of the squash team.

He was also in trouble.

During Whitney's junior year the Follies girl, who was then traveling as Mrs. Evan Burrows Fontaine, announced that she had left her husband on the promise of Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney to marry her and make her an honest and wealthy woman. After her divorce he had refused to marry her, and she believed he owed her $1 million for breach of promise.

Mrs. Fontaine did not understand the Whitneys very well. C.V. had a good allowance, but he did not have a million dollars to his name and was not about to get it as long as his father was in charge of the fortune.

His father did have the money for legal fees, and he hired a battery of lawyers. Mrs. Fontaine had her own battery of contingency counsel, who were willing enough to take on a Whitney for the chance that they might bring off her suit.

Harry Payne Whitney was not settling anything. There were some long and searching talks in the offices of Counsel John W. Davis, and it was decided to defend. Defend they did, for several years, until finally the Whitneys won the suit, and Mrs. Fontaine was enjoined from ever suing C.V. Whitney again in this same matter.

The unfortunate affair was the talk of Speak-easy Society, some-

thing over which Damon Runyon at Lindy's and Grace Wilson Vanderbilt in her dining room could chatter about. Whitney became known as a playboy—the cognomen stuck with the fitting nickname of Sonny—and he was trapped in that role for nearly the remainder of his life.

Yale did not think it was funny, and he went untapped when the new men were taken into the senior societies.

Henry Payne Whitney did not think it was funny either. During the last year of college C.V. was courting Emilie Norton, the daughter of a family that lived near the Whitneys in Westbury. When C.V. graduated there was none of the joyous welcome of father to son that had accompanied Harry's leaving Yale all those years before to go into the traction business and rush off west with Dan Guggenheim and his father's checkbook. Not at all. Whitney courted his girl, married her in Paris in the spring of 1923, and came home.

He was going to have to prove that he was not a playboy, his father said, and he gave him an allowance of $20,000 a year and a job as an underground sampler in a mine in Virginia City, Nevada.

The young couple moved out to the mining town, where C.V. was to do his penance. The day lasted from eight in the morning until four thirty in the afternoon, during which time C.V. put on his miner's clothes and lamp, and wandered about the stopes picking up samples that were labeled and delivered each afternoon to the assay office. At four thirty he and Marie could go horseback riding. In the evening they could dine with other miners and their wives or go to the movies.

C.V. Whitney apparently knew what he was up against at home. He rose to become assistant foreman of that mine, and then quit to move around to other mining camps as opportunity seemed to offer. There *was* to be opportunity, although not from the unforgiving hand of Harry Payne Whitney. When C.V. knew his business, he was taken on by Roscoe H. Channing, Jr., president of several of the elder Whitney mining properties and a prominent mining engineer.

The company was Metal Exploration Company, and C.V. Whitney was assistant engineer. For two years Whitney tried to learn—and tried to throw off the stigma of playboy. He learned at least, and made a good friend in Channing, with whom the relationship was more like the older Whitney's had been with his own father years ago.

In 1925 Whitney and Channing were involved in a salvage operation. After the gold and silver boom ended Will Whitney's political career in 1896, the mines of the West had been swiftly if uncertainly worked to remove the cream of the ore from them. The refuse piles were filled with gold ore that had not apparently been worth the refining processes of the Guggenheims and ASARCO in the early days

of the twentieth century. But methods had grown better, and Channing knew that he could make some money for the elder Whitney by reopening old properties. In several years Whitney and Channing recovered more than a million dollars in properties that Harry Payne Whitney had written off as total losses.

To do this they established a laboratory in Denver. After a year the laboratory developed a flotation process by which they were able to rescue ore from abandoned properties, where the low-grade ore had been abandoned. This process opened up new vistas on the stopes of Utah and in New Mexico and Arizona.

Once they had the process—which was done as secretly as they could manage—C.V. went innocently to Manitoba, Canada, and took an option for a few thousand dollars on an abandoned Guggenex mine. His playboy reputation must have stood him in good stead here—the miners could spit and swear and laugh at this tenderfoot who thought he could do something with a property the mighty Guggenheims had left.

And now C.V. was in a position to face his father as an equal—as a man of business who knew what he was about. He went to New York with his plan.

"We want permission to spend six hundred thousand dollars to build a pilot plant at the mine," he said. They had to be sure the process was not just a laboratory freak, but would convert successfully to the recovery of ores in commercial lots.

The elder Whitney pondered. His playboy son had come up with a solid proposition, and Channing backed it, so maybe it had some merit. He agreed.

Young Whitney and Channing then set out on a journey that would have delighted C.V.'s cousin Harry, the big-game hunter. They had to pack in—a hundred miles by canoe and seventy on foot. They went in with their option from Mining Corporation of Canada in hand. They found the property, the Flin Flon Mine. They established the flotation plant and began feeding ores in.

The trouble with Flin Flon was that the complex of ores had not lent itself to the best chemical methods of the Guggenheims. The ores were gold, copper, silver, zinc, and lead—all valuable if they could be precipitated in quantity.

Harry Whitney supported the development and put out the capital to pick up the option. Out of it came the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company, to be worth $30 million in a few years. C.V. Whitney began to regard this as his personal project.

The three years of exile into the back country had brought grudg-

ing respect of father for son. Now, at least, they got on well enough so that Whitney could come back into society, and could persuade his father to help finance various ventures in which he was interested.

In 1925 that interest turned to airlines. An old college friend of Whitney's was Juan Trippe, and three years after graduation the two of them joined John Hambleton, another World War I flier, in organizing Colonial Airways. The line hired pilots and secured a contract to fly the mail from New York to Boston—one of the biggest and most lucrative runs in the country.

Two years later Whitney and Trippe and Hambleton wanted to institute a New York-Havana service, but the majority of directors blocked them. So Whitney went to his cousin John Hay Whitney, whose fortune was much larger than his own, and to his cousin William H. Vanderbilt and to William A. Rockefeller and Averell Harriman and several other wealthy men for support of a new venture. There *was* a definite advantage in being a Whitney, and he secured their support and that of Grover Leoning and Sherman Fairchild. The new company was called Aviation Corporation of the Americas, and Whitney was its president. The operating capital was small: $20,000. And with that, Whitney, Trippe, and Hambleton, the guiding forces, set up the Havana run from Key West, and then extended the line to Puerto Rico and the Canal Zone.

They wanted a new mail contract. To get it they had to show financial responsibility, and in their case it meant a capitalization of $200,000. That's where other Whitneys and Vanderbilts and Rockefellers came in. Whitney raised much of the money for the company, and the others raised some. It was secured, the company did get its air mail contract, and Pan American Airways was formed as the operating company.

Trippe was the operating man. Whitney had other projects on his mind, so he retired into the management background to become chairman of the board. He took a serious interest in the company and its problems, he helped in planning and exploratory work, but he was busy elsewhere.

In the mid-1920s, Harry Whitney was still holding C.V. on a short string, but C.V. did have some money, gifts of his grandfather for one thing. He bought 150,000 acres of land in Mexico which his father was auctioning off, and he spent more money on irrigation. The land was then put under cultivation, and proved to be rich enough that when Whitney sold it to the Mexican government, he made a profit of half a million dollars. He then put most of the money into Pan American, again proving a certain shrewdness.

Father and son were getting on much better these days. C.V. even

began to share some of Harry's love for the horseflesh of the fast track. Of course he had grown up around horses, and he had ridden and played polo, but he had never really taken much interest in the breeding farm or the racing. Then, in 1927, C.V. accompanied his father down south for the Kentucky Derby, in which Harry had an entry named Whiskery.

They came down in style, in the elder Whitney's private railroad car. The car was parked on a siding not far from the breeding farm, and then Harry Whitney and his New York friends got involved in a running poker game.

Soon they were immersed, and the money was changing hands.

Young Whitney was not in the game. He kibitzed for a while. He wandered around. On Derby day, his father was very nervous—Harry was always nervous when one of his horses was running. He could barely stand watching the race, and sometimes he wandered off into the backstretch and actually did not watch. On this Derby day he had hopes for Whiskery, and all the fears of the professional breeder that something dreadful was going to happen, so at the last minute he decided he would not go to the Derby at all. He dispatched C.V. to be his agent.

So young Whitney went to Churchill Downs, a place he had never visited before. There he ran into the sportswriter crowd, which included Grantland Rice, Damon Runyon, Bill Corum, and Ring Lardner. He knew some of them, and they knew him so he joined them for lunch before the big race.

C.V. admitted that this was his first Derby, and he said he did not know what he was going to do if Whiskery won. He supposed he would have to make a speech, subbing for his dad.

That was right, said the writers.

Then what was he going to say? He was stumped.

"I'll tell you what to say," said Lardner. He picked up a copy pencil and wrote with the soft lead on Whitney's cuff: "Whiskery won because his mother was a mudder."

Looking at the rain outside, C.V. Whitney wondered if Lardner was making a joke or a prediction.

Anyhow, Whiskery did win, although the speech never got made because Whitney did not have the acumen to be down at the paddock waiting when the race was over, and by the time the police drove a flying wedge through the crowd, it was all over—Whiskery had his horseshoe of flowers on, and they were rubbing him down and leading him out to cool off.

C.V. went back to the farm. The poker game was still going on, and Harry received the news of his victory with complete aplomb, as

though he had known all the time it was going to happen. He kept on playing poker.

C.V. grew bored. He went out for a walk on the farm, and off on the hillside he saw a bonfire so he went over to investigate it.

When he got there, he discovered a crowd of blacks—all the hands on the farm were black in those days—and they were clustered around the big fire, eating, drinking, laughing, and singing, "strange weird chants I had never heard before. It was almost like some pagan rite."

He listened and he watched and no one paid him any attention or bothered him. He looked about and in the shadow behind the fire he saw a horse tethered. He went up to one of the men. The man did not know him, Whitney had never visited the farm before.

"Tell me about that horse," said Whitney. "What's his name and what's he doing here?"

"That's Regret," said the man. "The great Regret."

And of course it was, the handsome mare that had won the Derby earlier and the only other Whitney horse at that time to have won. They brought her up to share in their celebration. C.V. later recalled that night: "So the grooms and the hands and the caretakers and the exercise boys and the swampers all continued to sing and chant and tell stories of the barns and the track. I sat around until one or two in the morning listening to that wonderful singing, and for the first time I had some appreciation of the real emotions that go into racing."

Just like his father and his grandfather before him, C.V. Whitney was hooked that night. It was the family tradition.

He never lost the name of Sonny—even in his old age the dear friends and acquaintances who went back far enough called him by the youthful nickname. But after 1927 it did not sting so much. A million or two made on one's own can soften a lot of stinging.

In the early years, Whitney was a sort of advance man for Pan American. The Whitney name did not hurt a bit in opening the doors of faraway governments. Much earlier, Mining Engineer Channing had remarked that C.V. Whitney had an easy way about him that helped him make friends of miners and other down-to-earth characters who cared *what* a man was and not a lot about *who* he was. This characteristic, plus a command of Spanish, helped Pan Am in the early days when the run was being extended from country to country. Whitney went to Mexico in 1928 and recommended, after discussions, that Pan Am buy the Mexican Aviation Company. Juan Trippe bought it. Whitney went farther south and farther afield. His perspective was good, and he had a pilot's eye for airplane and line management.

It was 1930 when Whitney's father died, and this was really his coming of age. He was single again, divorced by Marie Norton Whitney in 1929, and he was back in the gossip columns because of it. And then suddenly, when his father died, instead of being Harry Payne Whitney's son, Sonny, he was Mr. Whitney with $20 million.

Some decisions had to be made, and one of them was expensive because C.V. did not immediately receive much cash from his father's estate.

Under New York law and the Jockey Club rules, a racing stable was not transferable, nor were its colors. When Harry died, then, the stable was sold, and C.V. bought it. Bitten by the racing bug, C.V. decided to keep the Kentucky farm. He was more than a little pleased that year, 1930, when *Equipoise*, one of his father's stable, won the Pimlico Futurity, and all the money that Harry had thrown into the racing game paid off. In the first years of the 1930s, the Whitney stables led the nation in winnings.

On his father's death, Whitney became chairman of the mining company, and continued to develop the Flin Flon property, whose success he regarded as his greatest single accomplishment in life. Flin Flon became the third-largest world producer of copper in Canada, and second-largest zinc producer, and the source of millions of dollars in "by-products"—gold, silver, and lead. He supervised the building of a whole town at Flin Flon, which soon housed five thousand people and provided two thousand jobs for the Canadian economy.

But he had broadened his interests:

- He was married again, to Gwladys Crosby Hopkins, in 1931.
- He was involved in Pan American, day to day.
- He began a project called Marine Studios in Florida.
- He was active in New York in the Museum of Natural History.
- He was active in the Metropolitan Opera Company.
- He served on the board of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

And he was deeply involved as producer and financier in the motion picture business.

That venture began with a dip into a business directorate, as a member of the board of Pioneer Pictures and of Selznick International. He got the movie bug, just at about the same time he got the political bug. In 1932 Whitney (a Democrat, of course) decided to run for Congress. He chose his Long Island district in which to run, against an incumbent named Robert L. Bacon, who had been serving from there since 1923. The district then comprised Nassau County and Suffolk

County and part of Queensborough of New York City. Nassau and Suffolk were largely Republican and would stay that way for years. Nonetheless Whitney would try—he was a brave man.

Franklin Roosevelt's party was ready in 1932 to challenge any Republicans any time, anywhere, so C.V. Whitney got the nod from the party. Roosevelt welcomed him to the ticket. Al Smith gave his consent.

Whitney opened a campaign headquarters at the old Garden City Hotel and hired a passel of public relations men. He campaigned as Cornelius Whitney—no Vanderbilt ties. That must have done Grace Wilson Vanderbilt's heart good, for that lady detested Roosevelt and all he stood for, and went to her grave believing that FDR had "betrayed his class" with the New Deal.

Whitney's public relations men taught him to kiss babies and shake hands and ride around in an open car (as Roosevelt did so well), waving and smiling and greeting people. He campaigned hard, from Floral Park to Orient Point, down to Montauk and back along the south shore again, criss-cross to Northport and back down. It was one of the biggest and most populous districts in the country in those days, and the travel was strenuous. Advance men went ahead and announced Whitney's arrival. The open Packard was well back in the pack. After the advance man started to attract a crowd, a band came up in a truck and played "Happy Days Are Here Again," and then up came Whitney, driven by Gwladys and accompanied by a bodyguard, who was a former prize fighter.

Whitney would make his speech. The themes were reform and better times under the Democrats, or the Veterans' Bonus, which the Republicans refused, or repeal of Prohibition. Then he would pass out sandwiches.

He was not the most effective candidate. The party managers hoped to trade on the name and the antipathy to the Republicans after the collapse of the economy, but the staunchly Republican New York *Herald Tribune* ran true to form and reported Whitney's activities on the society pages.

The candidacy created at least a temporary schism in family, for one of his brothers-in-law, Barklie McKee Henry, campaigned for Congressman Bacon. And when the election was held, Whitney did not manage to unseat the incumbent, in spite of the Democratic victory. He lost by 25,000 votes of a total 350,000. It was not a bad run, all things considered, but it was still a loss, and it was his last venture into politics. Whitney, like his grandfather, had no taste for the rumble-tumble of elective life.

That grueling experience over, Whitney then devoted a consider-

able amount of time to recuperating at the Adirondack mountain camp where a number of Whitneys kept homes. (It was a part of old William C.'s land-buying craze.) He also went to the new Harriman Spa at Sun Valley and to other outdoor places that interested him. On such expeditions he took his wife and whatever children and nephews happened to be about and available.

In 1934 Whitney came into the estate his father had left him and then had to buckle down even harder to business if he wanted to protect it. The times were not the best—in spite of the election of his friend Franklin Roosevelt.

In 1937 the Florida venture appealed to him so much and racing so little that he traded; he sold off the fifteen race horses he had in training and retired from the track, but he kept the breeding stable down in Kentucky and the studs and mares there.

But now his interest was marine life. Cousin Douglas Burden, with whom he had gone hunting and packing and sailing in various places around the world, came up with the idea of bringing the sea home to Americans by the establishment of a saltwater aquarium in the warm climate of Florida. So at St. Augustine they began to put up Marine Studios, which consisted of huge outdoor tanks. Whitney spent the summer of 1937 with Burden and several ichthyologists, harpooning and drugging sharks, and catching examples of sea life for the aquarium. They used Whitney's ketch, and he supported the project by investing half a million dollars in it to get it going. They put up a hotel, a restaurant, cabins, a motel, and a curio shop, and they called it Marine Land. Soon it was making a profit. Then it became a major Florida tourist attraction and very profitable indeed.

Whitney was increasing the fortune. One of the secrets of the increase was *commitment.* Houses and an apartment in the expensive River House on New York's East Side, and the various landed properties were expensive. As the twentieth century brought rapid increases in construction costs and taxation, the maintenance of such properties became too much of a burden, even for millionaires. Property was largely a drain unless it was being used; Whitney put his money into Hudson Bay Mining ($5.5 million) and Pan American ($4 million).

Because he had money, Whitney was constantly approached for investment of capital, and it was nearly a full-time job simply investigating opportunities, most of which were not suitable from his point of view. But there were some of a different order.

For example, one day in 1933 W.P. Jacobs came to see Whitney at his office in the Chrysler Building. They had been buddies in the war days when both were pilots down in Texas. Jacobs had gone into engineering and was chief engineer of the Beryllium Corporation—

one tiny laboratory and a dozen employees. He suggested that Whitney might want to come out to Cleveland, visit the company's laboratories, and see the possibilities of beryllium for use in aviation.

Here was a suggestion right down Sonny Whitney's alley. He knew metals. He knew flying. He knew the aviation business. So he went to Cleveland.

Out there in the lab, Jacobs handed him a piece of what looked like pipe—and it was as light as bamboo. Jacobs then explained that beryllium was the lightest of all the metals, and with nickel it produced an alloy four times as strong as structural steel.

Seeing the possibilities for air and water craft, Whitney invested in the company, and became its major backer. Seven years later the company built a big factory at Reading, Pennsylvania, and hired several hundred employees.

The Selznick International Corporation made money too. Selznick—and, in a way, Whitney—was responsible for *Gone with the Wind*, that phenomenally successful movie, and *Rebecca*, and *La Cucaracha*, which was an adventure in Pan Americanism, and many another essay in motion-picture making. He was on the ground floor in Technicolor.

Around 1940 Pan American fell into trouble, and since so much of his money was invested in the company, Whitney moved in as chief executive officer to see what he could do to straighten out affairs. He and his second wife, Gwladys, were not getting on well and were divorced that year; he married Eleanor Searle, a receptionist at Pan American, and he built her a new house on what he retained of the original Whitney estate at Old Westbury. Over the years the place had been split up. Originally it was nearly a thousand acres, and now C.V. had some 500 acres of the property.

The new house was a twenty-two-room colonial—large by the standard of 1941, but small indeed by the yardstick of Whitney's grandfather. Like the Rockefellers and others, even the tremendously wealthy Whitneys were feeling the pinch of hard times and the increasing burden of taxation on high income and high holdings. It was far from disastrous—social egalitarians said the income and estate taxes were not nearly high enough or equitable enough—but it began to cramp the Whitney life-style. The whole Whitney estate was expensive to operate. A hundred acres of it were divided between Flora—the bastion of the Whitney Museum—and Barbara, (Mrs. Barklie McKee Henry) and they lived on the estate. Together they shared certain expenses, although C.V. had to carry most of them. And it took a lot of money to maintain

- the twenty-two-room house, with gold-plated bath fixtures and everything to match
- the old thirty-room red brick château
- the huge old stable with its soft brick floor
- a working farm
- a race course
- a polo field
- a fieldhouse with glass roof. Inside were a tennis court, a heated swimming pool, and sauna
- a gymnasium containing two squash racquet courts, a boxing ring, a bowling alley, and a billiard room
- an outdoor swimming pool
- a children's playhouse with its own soda fountain
- miles of paved roadway and acres of plantings
- seven houses in which the servants and groundsmen lived. At one time the estate's labor force numbered a hundred and fifty people.

Back in the nineteenth century, this kind of wealth was detailed endlessly in the press, which tried to bring to American readers a sense of what it was like to be present at the champagne bashes of the very rich. The tendency in the 1930s and 1940s was still there, and C.V. Whitney continued to be a center of attention for society and scandal editors everywhere. C.V. Whitney worked hard at his business affairs. When the war came to America, he dusted off his pilot's license and his Pan American credentials and his reserve status and secured a commission into the Army Air Corps and the Air Force when it changed over. He served well and honorably, rose to colonel, and was decorated with the Distinguished Service Medal and saw action in two of the campaigns. When the war ended, he gave more to public service—he went to Washington in 1947 to help organize the new independent Air Force as Assistant Secretary and he served in that capacity until 1949. Then President Truman asked him to stay in Washington and take on a new responsibility—Assistant Secretary of Commerce. He did, for another year, and then he undertook a mission to Europe for Truman as special envoy to England, Luxembourg, Italy, and Spain, and while in Spain he became so enchanted with the country that he bought several properties there.

A major change in American society rescued Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney from the ignominy of going down in history as a poor little rich boy named Sonny. In the year 1961 one of Henry R. Luce's magazines pronounced the national dictum: SONNY WHITNEY: A SUCCESS IN SPITE OF HIS MONEY.

The magazine was not, as a reader might reasonably expect, *Fortune*, or even *Time* or *Life*. No, it was *Sports Illustrated*—and

that new magazine's success in the 1950s and 1960s paralleled Whitney's own: entertainment was major business in America. Whitney did not become famous for his perspicacious mining adventures, or for his derring-do and vision about military and civilian aeronautics. Not at all. He rose to acclaim because he had developed the finest racing stable in the United States. That was "success."

The stable, of course, had never really gone out of existence. Harry Payne had kept it up and improved it, and when C.V. temporarily gave up racing in 1937, it had been doing well. He had auctioned off the fifteen horses that he planned to race that year for $119,600. The next year they had won their various owners just about twice that amount at the tracks around the country, proving that he and his trainers knew what they were about.

In 1937 and 1938, instead of spending his time at the track, Whitney had led his Old Westbury Polo Team to two national championships (Whitney was a six-goal man himself). Then, he went back into racing, largely, he said, as a sense of obligation to a family tradition. He had none of the deep-seated love for the sport that his Aunt Helen had shown. Perhaps it was the presence next door of her stud farm, which later was to belong to his cousins Jock and Mrs. Payson. Perhaps it was a sense that he was failing the family. Anyway he went back.

In 1939 he bought Mahmoud, the 1936 winner of the English Derby, from the Aga Khan. He paid $80,000 for the stallion, and almost immediately Mahmoud began siring fine racing mares and brood mares, many of them bearing the gray that was to become distinctive of the line and the C.V. Whitney stable.

Other sires followed Mahmoud into the stable: Fisherman and Mount Marcy and Counterpoint. Dozens of mares came and went, depending on their get and the success of the Eton blue and brown colors on the track.

By 1959 the Whitney stable was important. That year Silver Spoon, by Citation out of one of the gray Mahmoud mares, cleaned up the tracks in California and made a good deal of money, although she finished way back in the Derby.

Then in 1960 came Tompion, who made good money, although he disappointed the farm at the Derby by running fourth. Dotted Swiss won about $300,000 and Silver Spoon won $130,000. Altogether the thirty-four horses Whitney was entering that year won more than a million dollars, and that made Whitney, for it was racing history. Only Calumet Farm had ever topped the million-dollar mark before.

That museum continued stoutly on its own after the abortive

attempt to join hands with the Metropolitan. In the 1950s the downtown location became impossible, and since John Hay Whitney was a member of the board of the Museum of Modern Art, an arrangement was made with that body to give the Whitney a piece of the Museum's garden for its own. That was done, and the Whitney had a new home at 22 West Fifty-fourth Street. Its directors continued in the tradition of the past, but now the Whitney was taken seriously in the art world, because many of those artists Gertrude had "discovered" had become prominent figures on the American art scene.

In the mores of the modern time, Whitneys married and divorced, and divorced and married. Barbara divorced her husband and married George Headley. Only Flora, of the three children, stayed married to one man, G. Macculloch Miller. A whole flock of Whitneys and Whitney children and Whitney children by marriage and Whitney in-laws gathered together at the Palm Beach Art Galleries in the season of 1966 to exhibit paintings of their own for sale in behalf of modern art. One would need a genealogical chart and the records of dozens of courts to figure out who was who and who had been who and who had been married to whom—but that was not just Whitneyism; the Whitneys were behaving much like all the rest of America of the 1960s.

The museum demanded more time and attention. At the Palm Beach showing C.V. rashly said he was going to devote all his time to painting. That could not be true. The track and the stud farm and his family and, to a lesser extent, the investments still took his time. He was, after all, at an age when many a man was retired, and he was talking careers again. But he worked—and he helped Flora when she began her plans for a new big museum of the Whitney's own, to be uptown at Seventy-fifth and Madison Avenue in New York. The cost of the new museum would be $8 million. The Whitneys set out to raise the money by public subscription and grants at a dinner at the Hotel Pierre. That was the modern way, and it was perfectly feasible because the Whitney had "arrived." New York *Herald Tribune* critic John Gruen commented on a show given from the collections of Friends of the Museum. Among the works were those of Hassam, Bellows, Davis, Hopper, and Glackens; and Gorky, de Kooning, and Kline—representing different ideas, different times—Marisol, Indiana, Chamberlain, who represented the latest work of the day. They had this in common, those 128 artists: they were all friends of the museum that had been such a good friend to them.

The ebullient developer who had bought up the Old Westbury estate discovered he had bitten off more than he could readily chew, and he sold 280 acres to the New York Institute of Technology for a

suburban campus. Another sign of the times: such conversions of the property of the wealthy to public or semipublic use was becoming common in America.

Most of the news items about the Whitneys in the 1960s appeared in the sports sections or the society sections of the newspapers. Then, at the height of the Saratoga racing season, and Saratoga's Center for the Performing Arts, in which the Whitneys were also involved, the then and now Mrs. C.V. Whitney, Mary Lou Hosford, was robbed of $780,000 worth of Whitney jewels, heirlooms for the most part. Emeralds, turquoise and diamond necklaces, and sapphires and rubies. It was the biggest crime story ever to hit Saratoga and it made the news pages of the New York *Times*.

But for the most part the Whitneys were doing what the people of their set did. They wintered somewhere warm with plenty of social life. They spent time at the stud farm. They came to New York spring and fall. They spent summer largely at Saratoga. They were busy and they seemed to be happy. They entertained his children and they brought up her children, and gave parties for them and commiserated over their divorces and congratulated them on their marriages. Harry Payne Whitney, C.V.'s son by his first marriage, married Alexandra Ewing—but they were divorced after three children and sixteen years.

Harry Payne Whitney then married Mrs. Andrew Wyatt Kellogg in 1966. She was a painter—not a society person of note. And he announced that he was going to quit the social scene (he was a New York stockbroker) and go to work for his father's Marine Land. He was forty-one, a good deal older than C.V. had been when he went out West to pick ore in the mines—but the idea was not dissimilar. C.V.'s other children were Nancy, who drifted into the Harriman orbit when her mother, Marie, married Averell Harriman, and Gail, the daughter of his second marriage, who married Richard Cowell. Also there was Searle, the son of the third marriage, to Eleanor Searle, who was in the 1960s and 1970s given the inside track as heir to the Whitney fortune—by the gossip columnists. And finally Cornelia, daughter of his marriage to Mary Lou Hosford in 1959.

So it went for C.V. Whitney. He toyed for several years with writing (his love at Yale) and undertook the preparation of his autobiography, a slow and painstaking process. His wife decided she would write a book, and the newspapers said it would be published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. That was fitting enough: Roger Straus, the president of the publishing house, was the son of a Guggenheim mother.

But who would know?

That was one of the confusing aspects of C.V. Whitney's society in the last half of the twentieth century. So many marriages, so many divorces, so many changes. One would have to have a mind like an old aunt of C.V.'s, Louise Anthony Torrance Vanderbilt, who used to ride about in her carriage for airings, saying her English kings and queens on her fingers like a catechism.

Down at the third-generation level of a family that drips with tradition it is not hard to begin confusing some of the characters—a liability under which the two male Whitney cousins, C.V. and John Hay Whitney, labored for most of their lives. C.V., of course, was Harry Payne Whitney's son; John Hay, or "Jock," was the son of Payne and Helen Hay Whitney. These Whitneys attended to the same schools, they knew the same girls, they went to the same parties—and who could be blamed for confusing them?

In the beginning the confusion was not great, for C.V. was five years older; Jock was born in 1904 when the Payne Whitneys were summering in Maine. So Jock was only a school boy at Groton when World War I broke out and C.V. went off to become an aviator. But like C.V. and Harry Payne and Payne and William C. and all those other Whitneys, Jock went to Yale, and he rowed on the crew—and confusion began. It was heightened by similarity of background and interests, polo, for example: Jock and his team won the national in '35 and '36, Sonny and his team winning in '37 and '38. Jock became interested in aviation and always had a plane or two about. Jock became addicted to horse racing, and he and his mother and sister had their stud farm right next to Sonny's.

But there were differences. One was in fortune. After his father died in 1927, Jock was immensely wealthy, for that Payne Whitney fortune was around $200 million. Jock did not get all that. He was always reticent about mentioning the dollars involved but it was estimated that he got around $50 million in that first distribution; much of the fortune was to be held for a time in trust.

After Yale Jock went off to England for a year of schooling. He managed to buy a couple of horses for himself by winning a ship's pool (on the distance of the day's run)—his allowance would not have permitted it. By 1929, when he was still in London, he gave a party that was described by a New York *Times* reporter as the most lavish given in that city for years; even the waiters were outfitted in the Jock Whitney racing colors of cherry pink, black, and white.

But there was no punishing of Jock, the way there had been of C.V., for youthful misdemeanors. He was too rich in his own right for that. He showed remarkably good sense for so young a man; he came home from England and apprenticed himself to the Wall Street firm of

Lee Higginson & Co. for less than twenty dollars a week. He started at the absolute bottom, as a buzzer boy, running errands from 8:45 A.M. until 5:15 in the evening. Only then was he free to have the chauffeur pick him up.

It was a little odd, said some of the denizens of Wall Street, who sat on the board of the Great Northern Paper Company and other firms, because in 1928 young Whitney had been elected a corporate director here and there, and now they saw their fellow director come into their offices running errands like a common twenty-dollar a week buzzer boy. They did not see him at the Bankers Club, because he was eating his hot dogs and drinking coffee at a quick lunch stand down the street so he would not overstay his brief lunch hour.

When the *Herald Tribune* discovered Jock down in Wall Street in his menial job, the paper made a sensation of it: "Mr. Whitney is best known to the public as an ardent sportsman and the owner of Easter Hero, the thoroughbred which recently won the Cheltenham Gold Cup and ran second in the Grand National in England . . . while at Yale . . . stroked the junior eight . . . class of '26 . . . polo player . . . Greentree team . . . amateur aviator . . . flew to the Pacific coast in his own amphibian . . . bought estate at Upperville."

And it was all true, including the estate at Upperville, Virginia, on the edge of Blue Ridge County, which the buzzer boy had just purchased. There was a reason for the estate: it was to be a wedding present for Mary Elizabeth Altemus, who became the first Mrs. John Hay Whitney in a wedding on Philadelphia's Main Line that fall. Dr. Peabody came down from Groton to marry off one of his favorite "boys" (Whitney had once been senior prefect of Groton). Robert C. Benchley of New York, the writer, the humorist, and comedian, was best man.

And the other members of the Whitney team?

There was Fred Astaire, the dancer; Donald Ogden Stewart, the writer; Thomas Hitchcock, Jr., polo's Hitchcock; Charles S. Payson, Whitney's brother-in-law; Cousin Sonny; Richard S. Scott; J. Wendel Smith; Henry C. Cooke, Jr.; Gardner W. Stout; James J. Wadsworth; and W. Stuart Symington—all names that were or would be worth a few million here and there, or a million laughs, or the plaudits of the public in later life. It was, in retrospect, as distinguished a wedding party as ever a man might have.

It should have been a happy marriage. The bride was a famous Philadelphia horsewoman and lady polo player. She had danced with the Prince of Wales—not once but twice. She was rich and social and had all the right friends even for one of the wealthiest young men in the world.

The wedding gifts were truly exquisite, not the showy kind of elegance affected by the rich of a previous generation but something much finer:

- an original Sheffield plate of 1805
- a coffee urn of 1766
- a small copper and silver teapot 150 years old
- a patchwork quilt made in 1804
- several nineteenth-century etchings
- nineteenth-century sporting prints
- antique candlesticks
- a silver fruit basket from the reign of George III
- a silver tray of 1782
- two jade urns
- the original of the last public speech given by Abraham Lincoln, with his own marginal notes and corrections
- an autographed photograph of Walt Whitman
- the original manuscript of Whitman's poem "O, Captain, My Captain"

Altogether there were three hundred presents, and having examined them, and having greeted all the groom's old pals and gone through the rigors of the reception line, the happy couple left by special train for Llangollen, the 1,100 acre estate at the foot of the Blue Ridge. Mary had spent most of the summer furbishing the place with antiques, so it was just the way she wanted it.

There was a little confusion at the reception. Jock and his friends had laid on a twenty-passenger plane from Curtiss Wright flying service to take the wedding party up to New York for some highjinks. Apparently Mary Elizabeth had another idea.

The house was up to any Whitney standard. George Washington had once slept there, and so had the Marquis de Lafayette. It was a pillared brick mansion approached by a long circular drive, bordered by old boxwood, and it was possibly the oldest house in Fauquier County. Or some of it was. Whitney reportedly bought it for $150,000 and then spent three quarters of a million dollars putting it together the way Liz wanted it, with stables, race tracks and a polo field, and a landing field for the airplane set.

The Whitneys then settled down to a life that was neither quiet nor simple. As E.J. Kahn put it in a profile for *New Yorker* some years later, "Whitney's personal possessions are numerous and of so elegant a nature that at times he gives the impression of living on just about twice the scale of the ordinary millionaire."

Why not? He had more money at the time than any family other

than the Rockefellers, whose interlocking financial directorate has always confused the financial estimating experts. And he came from a tradition of big spenders: Whitney and his wife had four Cadillacs—but Payne had had four Rolls Royces. *Autre temps, autre moeurs.* This Whitney branch always lived like that.

But big spending did not mean wasting, and the major responsibility that Jock Whitney would carry all his life was the need to conserve and manage the fortune. One way he did it was to be a conscientious company director. Another was to form an investment company which sought ways to build and buy business enterprises and make profits from them. But that was to come later. Before World War II, Whitney was involved in the motion picture business—with Sonny and Selznick. Jock's involvement was much more personal than Sonny's at this stage; he was the guiding light behind the purchase of *Gone with the Wind.* The story he told was that he read the book on the plane on the way to California, where Selznick was considering the idea. Then he insisted that Selznick buy it or he would buy it himself, for $50,000. Considering the fact that *American* magazine estimated the net gross of the movie at $20 million, it was a pretty good idea.

Another way to make money—it has turned out in the second half of the twentieth century—was to buy "old masters," including paintings that once were not old masters at all and were sniffed at by many an art buff: the work of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists—Manets and Pissaros and Picassos, Utrillos, Seurats.

Richard Thruelsen, in a three-part series of articles on Jock Whitney in *Saturday Evening Post*, was apparently sufficiently impressed by Whitney's collection to attempt to catalog it.

"A devotee of trivia recently spent a quiet half hour alone in the main forty by thirty foot living room at Greentree, and made a partial list of the room's furnishings on a handy bridge pad, to wit: 12 original paintings, including 2 Rousseaus, 2 Gauguins, 2 Van Goghs, 2 Renoirs, 1 Picasso and 1 Vuillard; 15 bookcases, 3 large sofas, 2 overstuffed platform rockers, 4 overstuffed chairs, 9 straight chairs, a tray bar, a bridge table, a grand piano, a large German music box, a radio-phonograph combination, 12 lamps, 40 hanging pictures—paintings, etc.—80 glass and Dresden figurines, 6 bronze busts and statues, approximately 500 framed photographs of family and friends, 2 small indifferent dogs, and a three foot arch of wax flowers framing a music box under glass. . . ."

So art collecting turned out to be one way to conserve, although Jock Whitney's reasons for collecting were connected with taste and his position as a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art beginning in 1930.

Whitney was also one of America's favorite "angels" of theatrical production, and, unlike some, he was not always wrong. One day late in the 1930s he received a script for a play—*Life with Father.* He read it and liked it. But he wanted a little buttressing in his opinion, so he sent it off to his friend Robert Benchley, who was then a drama critic. What did Benchley think?

"I could smell this alleged comedy you want to back, before the mailman got it up to the door," wrote Benchley when he returned the script. "I can't see a thing in it. If you don't want to lose your shirt, lay off."

Whitney got the note, laughed and went ahead on his own judgment. The play was tremendously successful, and Whitney made hundreds of thousands of dollars from it.

Sometimes he won, sometimes he lost. He won often enough to do well. He invested heavily in Technicolor in the 1930s when color movies were considered an expensive luxury. That brought another small fortune.

When he lost, it would be spectacular. He became involved in a tree-planting project—to bring a new species of fast-growing palm to America—that cost him a quick $150,000. But he had neglected to find out whether the tree would grow in America. It would not.

He lost $400,000 in a magazine enterprise, and a little less on a national radio chain that failed. But he made over half a million before World War II in Pan-American—Sonny's venture.

So by 1941 Whitney had gained about a million dollars in his various adventures, not counting the motion picture deal. He and Selznick and Sonny and others were in that profitable Selznick International that made many millions before it was through, and Jock owned 40 percent of the stock.

In 1940 they dissolved Selznick International, to cut up the profits from *Gone with the Wind* and *Rebecca*, two of the big successes of the film industry. That year Mary Elizabeth Whitney went to Carson City, Nevada, where she divorced Whitney. Two years later he married Betsey Cushing Roosevelt, the daughter of a Boston doctor and socialite and the former wife of James Roosevelt.

Whitney was now thirty-seven and he had simmered down considerably. One indication was the guest list at the wedding. The only survivors from the first wedding were the family, which included Charles Payson, Sonny, Tommy Hitchcock, and Henry Coke. Gone were Donald Ogden Stewart and Fred Astaire and Robert Benchley. It was a different world for Jock Whitney now.

For a wedding trip they went to Greenwood, the plantation down in Georgia that William G. Whitney had bought so long ago, then to

Florida, which was the modern thing to do. Then they went to Washington, for Whitney had been appointed Motion Picture Coordinator of the Office of Inter-American Affairs; Nelson Rockefeller was the boss: They were trying hard to make friends with Latin American countries that had been alternately raped and ignored by the industrial giant America for a hundred years. Whitney's job was to promote films that would further interAmericanism, and he did so. The best of them was a Disney short feature called *Saludos Amigos*, which enjoyed considerable popularity just before World War II.

When the war came, Jock Whitney wanted to get in it, and in the spring of 1942 he joined the air force. He was commissioned captain and sent to Intelligence School, and then to England. Soon he became public relations officer for the 8th Air Force. And when General Ira Eaker was transferred to the Mediterranean Allied Air Force in 1943, Whitney went with him as political liaison officer with the British—a task for which his year at Oxford certainly was no disadvantage.

Whitney was eager to get off staff and into operations. He had risen to the rank of colonel, which did not make him easy to place since he had no command experience. But he buttonholed people, and one day he caught General Donovan, the head of the Office of Strategic Services, which had all kinds of odd assignments in its table of organization. Donovan said he was planning an infiltration of the Japanese forces in the Pacific, and suggested that Whitney might take command of a post where he would train some Asiatics to carry out the mission. The Nisei batallion was then fighting in Italy; this encounter took place at Caserta, north of Naples, and the job was coming up right away.

In fact, Whitney had his orders in his pocket a week after the Allies invaded southern France, and he was already involved with the OSS. Through the OSS men he arranged to make a tour of the OSS forward operations in that area, and he got hold of a weapons carrier and driver named Pfc. Moretti to transport him. Whitney and Moretti were looking for the fellows who had been behind the lines, working with the French underground. In the Rhone Valley they picked up two French Maquis and went on ahead. Their mission was to drop the Maquisards right up next to the German lines.

They got off the main road, where the advance was moving, onto a side road, and outflanked the enemy, unfortunately, for themselves, for the next thing they knew a German machine gun was firing at them from an ambush. There they were in the middle of the road, behind the German lines—in their unarmored weapons carrier, with a tommy gun, a pistol, and a carbine.

Pfc. Moretti stopped the weapons carrier and began firing his tommy gun. Whitney jumped down by the right front wheel, protected by the vehicle's front end, and began firing the carbine. But the brakes failed and the weapons carrier slid down the road, leaving Whitney out in the open. He ducked into the ditch beside the road, arriving all in a heap with Moretti.

The four men made their way on hands and knees down the ditch away from the machine gun until they were out of its range and out of sight, and then they saw a farmhouse that had been evacuated. They got inside safely, and then Whitney covered one of the Frenchmen with his carbine while the civilian reconnoitered outside the rear of the house. He came back with bad news: a German tank was sitting just out back of the farmhouse.

"I asked him how many soldiers he had seen," Whitney later wrote in his official report, "but he went into the house too quickly to reply. I then saw through a high hedge the legs of approaching men."

From the house, Moretti yelled at Whitney to hold his fire and get inside. Whitney ducked back and managed to get into the house.

Then the fight began.

They managed to hold the Germans off for a while. But only for a while. The troops outside had grenades and a mortar. Soon Whitney and the others started down the stairs to see if they could get out. Moretti wanted to shoot it out. And then a grenade landed in the doorway.

"Kamerad," shouted Colonel Whitney.

From outside came unintelligible shouting. Whitney pushed aside the wrecked door and stepped out, to be greeted by German soldiers holding guns at the ready.

The four men were captured on August 23, 1944. Almost immediately they were separated and Whitney did not see the others again. Whitney was, after all, a high-ranking officer, Moretti by uniform at least was a private first class, and the Frenchmen, whatever tale they told to save themselves, were civilians. Whitney was pushed into the back of a German half-track armed with a howitzer, and taken up the Rhone Valley toward a German headquarters. During the trip they were attacked at night by French Maquis forces, while moving in convoy. The convoy slowed to fight, and in the darkness the tracers crisscrossed the roadway. Whitney moved to the back of the half-track, and got ready to jump out, to run for his life. Just as he tried to jump the gun loader caught him by the seat of the pants—and that German was strong enough to hold him. The colonel was a captive.

They watched him carefully after that incident, but by stealthy

movements he managed to throw his OSS orders out of the half-track into the road. He also got rid of other incriminating documents that might have gotten him shot out of hand.

Next day, the convoy was still on the road in daylight and was hit several times by strafing American fighters. But Whitney's half-track survived and kept moving on, backward as far as he was concerned, into captivity.

When Whitney was questioned the next day, he identified himself as a Special Services officer, making a survey of ground force recreational activities and facilities. What could be less warlike in the military? The Germans were busy, he was in proper uniform, and there was no particular reason to disbelieve his story, so he was put in a granary overnight with three other captured Americans.

That night Whitney managed to talk to the Frenchman who owned the granary. He told him he would leave a message in the straw when they moved on next day, giving his name and the names of the others, and asked the Frenchman to get the message out. It was addressed to Tex McCrary, an old Whitney friend, newspaperman and at the time public relations officer of the Mediterranean air force. The note asked McCrary to inform Betsey Whitney that he was captured but in good shape.

The Frenchman got the message out. McCrary was in France at that time, and he returned to Caserta three days later to discover the message on his desk.

A correspondent heard the name of Whitney and the story. He drew the right conclusions and sent the tale off, with all the proper precautions about waiting for release and so forth.

But the next afternoon at Belmont Park, the loudspeaker interrupted the day's racing to announce that John Hay Whitney, one of the upholders of the breed, had just been captured by the Germans.

That was how the Whitney family learned that Jock had been captured—by public address.

If the Germans had figured out *who* Whitney really was undoubtedly he would have been taken to Berlin to be used for whatever propaganda purposes Dr. Goebbels could manage. Whitney gave his name, rank, and serial number—and his proper name at that. But the German soldiers in the line were not up on the names of American millionaires—not even Whitneys—so he remained another anonymous colonel who had been caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.

It was some time before the Whitneys learned the rest of the tale.

Whitney was taken back by this German unit on its retreat, until the force reached the rail line at Dijon on September 6. Whitney and

the other prisoners, who were being carried along as excess baggage, were here locked into a boxcar and put on a siding to be shipped to Germany and prison camp. All in all there were forty-four prisoners plus Whitney, including the ten-man crew of one B-17 which had been forced down when three engines went out.

The car was hooked up to a train, and they began to move. In the night, one of the men proved adept as a safecracker, pried open the lock of the boxcar door, and made ready to get away. They rode for more than a day. Then, fearing they would soon be too far east, Whitney and ten other prisoners decided to make a break for it. The train was moving along at a good clip, around twenty miles an hour, when they approached the edge of a forest; one by one they slipped out and rolled down the embankment and slid into the woods. They split up into small groups, and Whitney drew a lieutenant from Texas and a private who had been born in Vienna, Austria. They started through the woods, but stopped at the edge—luckily, because the forest was surrounded by German troops.

Finally they managed to approach a village near the edge of the forest, and Whitney found a small boy, to whom he entrusted the fact that they were Americans and needed help. The boy went away, and for three hours the Americans crouched in the rain in the woods, shivering in soaked uniforms.

Suddenly they heard loud voices. The enemy?

But no—the boy had not been captured, he had not informed on them. He had done precisely as directed, and he had brought the men of the village with him when he returned in rain cape and hat.

First there was the butcher, with a basketful of sausages.

Second was the baker, with great loaves of bread.

Third came a woman of the village, carrying hard-boiled eggs.

Fourth came the owner of the vineyard, with a helper who carried a demijohn of amber wine.

Fifth, sixth, and seventh came the *Notaire* and two leading committeemen of the village.

Eighth came a man from Paris who had relatives in the village.

Ninth came *Le Maire*, and tenth and eleventh a pair of his assistants.

So they sat down there in the rain-soaked forest and the hungry men wolfed down the food, while *Le Maire* made a speech about *les grands Americains* (Colonel Whitney was six feet tall) and about the *soldats* and the *boches* and freedom and safety. By the time they began to move toward the village the erstwhile prisoners were full of food, happy, and a little drunk.

The French kept them for three days, hidden in the houses of the

village, as the Germans lurked about, waiting to withdraw on order. Then they did withdraw, and the United States forces began to move up. The local commander of the Maquis put on his old army tunic and escorted the Americans ceremoniously to the Allied lines.

So there was the highlight of Whitney's war: an exciting tale with a happy ending. But the ending was not so happy for all Whitneys; Jock's nephew Daniel Payson was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. But Jock survived his experience nicely, and when the war was over, he swiftly moved himself back into the life of a capitalist and entrepreneur.

Almost immediately after the war, John Hay Whitney gave a cruel blow to a faltering Society by insisting that the Whitney's name be deleted from the Social Register. He had met many new strange types in the war years, and he no longer felt that the Upper Crust represented anything but arrogance.

By this time Helen Hay Whitney had died, leaving her fortune, plus various pieces of real estate she had been using since Payne's death, to Jock and his sister. So Whitney, as one of the richest men in the world, could more or less make his own Social Register if he chose—and it turned out that he did. Public relations man Tex McCrary was a friend, and so was newspaper columnist John McClain. This Whitney got to know politicians, such as Harold Stassen, Wayne Morse, and Jacob K. Javits. These were *Republicans*, a fact that possibly had the shade of old William C. Whitney spinning in his place in the mausoleum. For Jock Whitney was to become a Republican supporter and contributor, just as was Sonny, for that matter. It was said during the Nixon years that Sonny gave $250,000 to the Nixon campaign in hopes that he would be named ambassador to Spain. He was disappointed—the young men around Nixon thought Sonny was too old—but Jock had quite a different experience a bit earlier with President Eisenhower. He was appointed in the Eisenhower administration to be ambassador to Great Britain—a post that almost always went to a rich man who could afford to keep up the Georgian mansion in London that Barbara Hutton gave the government, and which takes fifteen servants to run adequately.

Whitney could be an ambassador and a good one. By the 1950s he was looking for something challenging like that. He had come back from the wars to make money, started an investment firm—J.H. Whitney & Co.—and begun to apply to the business, technological, and scientific worlds some of the ideas he had used so forcefully in the prewar years in occupations with more glamour.

On a high floor of one of the Rockefeller Center skyscrapers in

New York, Whitney set up the offices in 1946 with $10 million in capital and the announcement that he was looking for investment adventure—risk capital.

Soon he had hundreds of offers—from a man who wanted to set up a string of expensive bordellos, to another man who had a revolutionary method of brick manufacture. The first was turned down on grounds of moral responsibility. The second was turned down after the Whitney firm had spent a hundred thousand dollars in research that indicated the job was too hard to tackle.

There was enough effort and enough brains (bright young men were first put on the bird-dogging, only at the end did matters come to the senior partners) to make sure that the business prospered. But sometimes they won, and sometimes they lost in what ordinary men would consider spectacular fashion. They sank $340,000 into an effort to compete with Eastman Kodak—and lost. That defeat might have sobered a less adventurous tycoon. It did not sober Whitney. In the fall of 1948 Whitney had the idea that his golfing friend Bing Crosby could be persuaded to plug Minute Maid Orange Juice—another of the flyers he was betting on. He got to Crosby with a capital gains deal, made Crosby a director of Minute Maid, sold him stock at one cent on the dollar, and arranged with William S. Paley, Whitney's brother-in-law, for a deal on Crosby testimonials over CBS stations—and made a million or so out of Minute Maid. Of course, not everyone played golf with Bing Crosby or had Bill Paley for a brother-in-law—but that was just one of the chains of events that a modern fortune could put into play in America in the twentieth century. The Whitney company made even more by investing in the Spencer Chemical Company, which specialized in synthetics. Whitney & Co. put $1.4 million into Spencer Chemical to let it buy up surplus government plants, and in the spring of 1950 Whitney sold most of its stock for $6.5 million and still kept some $4 million worth of investment in Spencer.

As he grew older, Whitney turned more and more to public service and to the obligations of charity. In those few hours when he had been a captive of the Germans, Whitney had been shocked to see that his less privileged citizen-soldiers were not convinced of the moral imperatives of World War II, and in the postwar years he began to spend large sums of money on education, with the purpose of convincing them of the values of the American way that had brought the Whitneys all their millions. He established The John Hay Whitney Foundation, which began giving educational fellowships. Whitney continued such practices and his patrician ways—indeed by the time he got the ambassadorship to England in 1956, he was styled by the New York *Times* as that "amiable aristocrat."

In 1960, Whitney resigned the embassy post, since John F. Kennedy would soon be coming into the White House and would want his own man. Whitney had served honorably and well in London—and if his embassy there was not as distinguished as that of his grandfather, John Hay, it was largely because of the change in attitudes of generations. When John Hay was minister to London, Presidents and Secretaries of State used the legation as an extension of their own foreign policy. The minister was heard and was listened to. But in the Eisenhower years, a new kind of foreign policy was made, most of it by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who rushed about the world in a jet plane making instant decisions and paying little attention to his ambassadors or even his State Department. So if Whitney did not shake the world in London, it was largely because that world was unshakeable at that level.

In 1958 John Hay Whitney decided to buy the ailing New York *Herald Tribune* from the Reid family, which had owned the newspaper since 1872. His interest was a combination of the excitement of the race, a historic feeling for a newspaper that was once edited by Grandfather John Hay, and the feeling of a need to keep a strong Republican organ alive in New York City. He brought John Denson from *Newsweek*, a bright and lively editor, who snapped up the paper and began the long road back to competitive position with the New York *Times*. Yet the effort was doomed from the beginning. For one thing, Whitney did not understand that a newspaper is not primarily a business but a voice. He tried to learn this, and his eager young staff members tried to teach him. But Whitney was a businessman, and he looked at the ledgers. The newspaper was losing millions. He looked across at the New York *Times*—with its $125 million in revenues and its profits—and he did not see that the reason the *Times* was doing so well was that the Sulzberger family, the publishers, poured almost all the profits back into the paper in the form of news coverage, writers, and production improvements.

Whitney tried to run a bright, liberal paper, but he tried to save it as a business with business methods. He brought in efficiency experts, the management consultant firm of McKinsey and Company, and he hired Robert MacDonald, one of the experts, to help run the paper. He took Walter Thayer from his own firm. Thayer, a lawyer, was president of the paper. Then Thayer and Denson crossed swords when Thayer tried to invade the newsroom in an effort to smooth out the flow of reading material—which tended to bunch up in the composing room just before edition time, costing extra money in printing. Denson bridled (as any newspaper editor would) and quit. That was the beginning of the end.

But the end was probably inevitable anyhow. The paper lost $4 million in 1963—a little much even for a Whitney to contemplate for more than a year or two. It showed it was going to lose heavily in 1964—and it did. It lost more millions in 1965. Then in 1966 it became impossible to continue without endangering the Whitney fortune. He attempted to merge the paper with most of what was left of New York journalism: the *Journal-American*, and the *World Telegram and Sun.* The idea was to publish a morning paper, an evening paper, and a Sunday paper. But the plan bogged down in arguments with unions, and Whitney's patience ran out. So the *Herald Tribune* was closed down in 1966. The *World Journal Tribune*—which was to be the merger—never got off the ground, thus leaving the city of New York with three newspapers.

Whitney by this time had spent much money in communication and he owned television and radio properties, Sunday supplements (*Parade*), and magazines (*Interior Design, Art in America*). He retained an interest in the Paris edition of the *Herald Tribune*, which was continued for international purposes even after the *Tribune* collapsed. The holding firm was called Whitney Communications Corporation, with assets of perhaps $75 million.

With the end of the *Herald Tribune*, Whitney became much less of a public figure. He, too, was getting along.

In the 1970s, he began to make some large commitments to his favorite causes, and one of these, Yale University, was granted $15 million to build residential facilities for six hundred undergraduates. It was the largest gift ever given Yale by an individual.

Years before, Whitney had looked over his world and said that some day he hoped that he would be able to give away more money than the Rockefellers. He would never manage that in the aggregate, because there were too many Rockefellers for him, but in the Yale gift he did what he liked best—he went one up.

In her own way, so did his sister Joan.

When Joan Whitney was a little girl, growing up between the New York townhouse, the Greentree mansion on Long Island and the Payne Whitney horse operations down south, her mother, Helen, used to take her to the races and let her bet twenty-five cents on each race. She won enough to be lured by the track, and when Helen Hay Whitney died in 1944 her daughter was all ready to step in and challenge any comers as First Lady of the Turf.

Little Joan had other mighty obligations besides taking Mother to the track—she had to accompany Helen to the Polo Grounds to watch the Giants labor, preferably against the Brooklyn Dodgers, and she had

to ride the family yacht over to New Haven to watch Brother Jock work out with the Yale crew. So she learned the intricacies of yachting, shell racing, and baseball scoring at about the time other girls were learning to knit.

At Yale she met her future husband, Charles Shipman Payson, who was a contemporary of Sonny Whitney's and an oarsman on the Yale crew.

Joan went to day school in New York, and then to Barnard College, but only for a year. She opted next for a business course at Brown's business college. And then she met Payson again, saw him at parties, and they were married in 1924.

Payson was the son of a long line of clergymen, some of them famous for their New England contentiousness, and tucked away in the escutcheon is a Civil War general named John M. Brown. Payson's father was a banker in Portland, Maine, and that is where he grew up. In 1924, when they were married, Payson was in law school at Harvard. Given the pattern of his youth, one might even think he was a Whitney.

The wedding was one of those nice little New York society affairs: ceremony for four hundred at Christ Church in Manhasset, and then reception for a thousand at Greentree.

The young couple spent part of their time in Maine, and part of it in the New York ambience. In 1929 Joan Whitney Payson went into a business enterprise with Mrs. Richard Kimball—a school friend. They opened a children's bookshop on the East Side of New York called Young Books. It prospered in spite of the depression, and in 1942 it was merged with the Wakefield Book Shop and kept on going in spite of the war.

The Paysons had five children; Daniel, as noted, was killed in the Battle of the Bulge, an event which confirmed all Charles Payson's deep beliefs that the United States had no business taking part in that war. He had been involved in the antiwar movement for several years, as backer of an anti-interventionist magazine called *Scribner's Commentator*, which the American Nazis and the German-American Bund loved dearly. The articles were anti-British, antiwar, and anti-Roosevelt, which was not hard for this adopted member of the Republican side of the Whitney family. Payson was lucky in one sense—he became involved in a scandal; someone charged that some $39,000 in gifts to the publication came from pure Nazi sources, and in the hubbub, Payson resigned. Three weeks later came Pearl Harbor, and the question of the war became moot.

After that time Payson stayed generally out of politics, except to back his causes with money, much of it anonymously given.

He had money of his own—not nearly so much as the millions that were Joan's share of the Whitney fortune—enough to go into business, and when Payne Whitney died he thoughtfully gave his son-in-law nearly $3 million in his own right. That must have helped the marriage survive—for it turned out to be one of the most successful of all the Whitneys marriages. No divorce in this branch of the family.

When the Payne Whitney fortune was split up, and after Helen Hay died in 1944, Joan Whitney received a great deal more of the money than was usual for a woman in the Whitney family—a sign of the times. One might call her one of the lady millionaires who was liberated early on—partly through the activities of her mother and her Aunt Gertrude, both of whom insisted on going out into the world and "doing their own thing."

Joan followed the pattern of Jock, or Jock followed the pattern of Joan—she was two years older than he—and her collection of Gauguins, Renoirs and Van Goghs rivaled his at least. Knoedler, the Fifty-seventh Street art gallery, made a catalog of this collection, which it regarded as important—hundreds of pieces of fine art worth many millions of dollars.

Joan's career followed Jock's in other ways. They were both involved (with Sonny) in the middle days of the motion picture business. Joan was a play backer just like Jock, and often with him. She backed *A Streetcar Named Desire*, the Tennessee Williams play, and made much money out of that.

She was more the horsewoman than he the horseman—once Jock told an interviewer that he really did *not* like race horses at all. In his later years he refrained from such outright opposition, but even as a Jockey Club steward he never showed the outright enthusiasm for the track that Joan gained from her mother.

Like Jock, Mrs. Payson continued to live in a baronial style long after this mode of living went out of fashion among the millionaire families. She was old-fashioned about it, in a way. She and Charles Payson had five homes, the house at Manhasset that she inherited; a house on the breeding farm at Lexington; a house at Hobe Sound, Florida; a house at Saratoga for the race season; and a house near Portland, Maine, out of deference to old Whitney stamping grounds and Charles Payson's background.

The way to get there—the way Jock would get there—in the 1970s would have been by private plane. But not Mrs. Payson. She maintained a private railroad car called Adios. The private car had three bedrooms, a bar, and a lounge. The biggest problem with it in the 1970s—given the size of the Payson fortune at somewhere around

$200 million—was to find trains to carry the private car where it was going when the Paysons wanted to go there.

After the war, the Paysons prospered, as they always had, for like the Rockefeller fortune the Payne Whitney fortune and its offshoots is probably safe from everything but government intervention, and in spite of some attempts in Washington and the states to tax the rich out of existence, the loopholes had been large enough in the twentieth century for a well-managed fortune to continue to grow with the inflation.

Mrs. Payson was never as famous in her accomplishments as Eli Whitney or Asa Whitney or Will Whitney. She was born a rich woman, she dabbled nicely, she bought her own little art gallery out on Long Island to play with, and she took her racing seriously.

Charles Payson was involved in more than coupon cutting, after the war. He bought a small Pittsburgh firm called the Applied Science Corporation that knew how to make use of uranium products. Soon this was the base for a group of scientific firms lumped together under the name Vitro Corporation that did such chores as engineer systems on the Polaris submarines and surface missile-bearing vessels, and developing communications networks.

Payson bought himself a shooting plantation of 13,000 acres northeast of Fort Myers, Florida, and spent all the time he could down there, for while the chubby Mrs. Payson was a spectator sportsman, Payson was always an activist and there was nothing he liked better than padding around with a 20-gauge over-and-under shotgun in arm.

The Paysons gave parties in all these years and they were dutifully chronicled by the gossip columnists and the society page scribes. Their children married. One daughter became Mrs. Vincent de Roulet, and she lived in Manhasset near her mother, while her husband also took to the track and became a New York state racing commissioner. Another daughter became Mrs. Henry B. Middleton, and moved to fashionable Tucson, Arizona.

John Whitney Payson went to Maine to make his mark and live his own life.

But the most glamorous of the children was Sandra, who married William Blair Meyer, divorced him, and then married Sir George Weidenfeld, a British book publisher. After mingling in the high reaches of Britain's society for a few years, she left home and returned to live in New York city.

When the children were grown, Joan Payson found time heavy on her hands, and she looked around for a new and exciting investment. She found it in 1950 when she bought a single share of stock in the New York Giants—the National League baseball team.

In the next ten years a stockbroker named Donald Grant bought up 10 percent of the stock in the Giants for her. Then the Giants moved to San Francisco, and Mrs. Payson sold out. She wondered for a bit what to do, considered founding a third major league and was talked out of it, and then agreed to finance the New York Mets as a team to replace the Giants in the city. Soon she was president of the company (Casey Stengel was her coach), and the Mets took as big a place in her heart as had the track.

Her interest was extreme; she made decisions regarding players, particularly in the early years when the Mets were not doing well. When she went off sailing in the Greek islands one spring, she had her chauffeur attend all the games, and keep a running score and send her the scorecards.

Dan Parker, the sports writer, remarked one day when the Mets were engaged in one of their suicidal losing streaks (they sometimes ran to seventeen games) that the Mets were a team that "needed mothering." Mrs. Payson mothered them; when Met outfielder Jim Hickman hit a home run one day while she was in the stands, she sent him a bouquet of flowers. A case of beer would have been better appreciated in the locker room, and she soon learned that her kind of mothering was better for the track than the dugout, but still there were advantages to being the team of the richest lady in town: in spring training she was known to take the whole team from St. Petersburg to West Palm Beach for cocktails and a dinner party. In a big party after the end of each season she fraternized with the team and led the singing.

The Mets responded, and in the fall of 1969, Charles Shipman Payson's birthday was celebrated by the New York Mets winning the World Series, to become the most spectacular Cinderella team in the history of the sport.

So Mrs. Payson had a new triumph.

For four more years this pleasant plump lady surveyed her world avidly and enjoyed her life as a leading sports figure. In her private railroad car, in her green Bentley, she moved from one house and one sports ambience to the other, to Churchill Downs, Shea Stadium, and then to Saratoga. Then, in the spring of 1975, she suffered a stroke and entered New York Hospital. She seemed to recover, but it was illusory. On October 4, 1975, at the age of seventy-two, Joan Whitney Payson died at New York Hospital. The sporting world lost one of its key figures. That world and New York's leading figures lamented her and buried her quietly.

Of course it was a little different from the old days. In the spring of 1892, the grandfather of this generation of Whitneys had returned

from a pleasant trip to Europe to find Grover Cleveland waiting for him impatiently in New York. On June 9 that year, William C. Whitney held an organizational meeting at the house at 2 West Fifty-seventh Street, at which he and Cleveland and the other Democratic politicians ordained the progress of the Democratic National Convention of that year. The meeting began at eleven o'clock, in the morning. Before noon Whitney had settled on William L. Wilson of West Virginia to be temporary chairman. Before sherry, former Governor James E. Campbell of Ohio was chosen to become president of the convention. At lunch the whole group was locked into a committee to assure the nomination of Cleveland at Chicago, and the nominating speeches were parceled out. And when William Whitney assembled his team at the Hotel Richelieu in Chicago a few days later it all worked out just as he said. He engineered the nomination, and he went on to engineer the election. And no one even knew he had done it!

The modern Whitneys could not match that—at least they had not matched it as the twentieth century went into its last quarter. But then again Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney had two sons—the male line was continued—and they remained to be heard from.

11/ L'Envoi

The tale of the Whitneys is told here in selective fashion, and it includes only those members of the family who captured my imagination. Another might choose quite a different representation, for, as with most early American families, the Whitneys have spread large across the continental canvas.

My interest, as with my interest in other powerful or once-powerful American families, is in tracing a part of the American heritage through this line. In the Whitneys it is interesting to note a larger preoccupation in recent years with cultural and governmental affairs, rather than with the pure business and entrepreneurial approach of families that peaked in earlier generations. The Vanderbilts, for example, were a tremendously powerful family in the middle years of the nineteenth century. But by the time that Vanderbilts began to concern themselves with public betterment and the arts, the family was no longer nearly so powerful. William Kissam Vanderbilt II and Harold Vanderbilt were cases in point: the former was greatly interested in the biological sciences, and his Long Island home is a veritable museum of marine specimens collected, in a truly scientific manner, on long voyages, with a biologist in attendance. The latter was a great sport sailor, far more than the "amateur"—for nearly all of the very rich were exposed to sailing as a gentleman's sport in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. More, Harold Vanderbilt turned to bridge and became one of the world's great authorities on that game.

The idle rich disporting themselves, you might say?

Perhaps.

But in the case of the Whitneys, throughout, this is not so. For Anne Whitney, born in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, was an important American artist and a lesser poet in days when the creative juices of this continent were just beginning to flow. In her own way, too, Anne was a forerunner of women's liberation. She *was* a liberated woman. You could say, of course, that she was lucky enough to be born into a well-to-do family, and thus could comport herself as she pleased. But that is an oversimplification. As the text indicates,

Anne had a difficult time in doing things her own way, and it was only because of the happy accident of her family's natural tolerance and her brother's support that she was able to travel in Europe with another woman but no male chaperon for protection, and that she was able to pursue sculpture when it was generally regarded in New England as a male prerogative, and for slightly unbalanced males at that.

And then, in the artistic balance, I found Myron Whitney, a truly great singer whose fame came at a time when American music was just developing. Unless these pages manage to stimulate the historians of music into massive reevaluations, it is doubtful that Myron or his period will ever receive the attention they deserve. The history of music is, after all, a rather esoteric subject, not often perused by other than professional musicians, and not even by many of them. The shelves of Yale University's Sterling Library contain millions of volumes on every conceivable subject, but there are not very many on the development of music in America. Much of what has been written about Myron and his times has passed into the afterglow of periodical journalism. That lack, however, does not or should not dim the brightness of Myron Whitney's star. Where great music is loved, he should be known, and sometimes in rare places his name still crops up, although certainly not as frequently as a name like Caruso, with whom Myron Whitney justly deserved to be associated in terms of excellence.

Still considering the artistic qualities of the Whitneys, let the reader think for a moment about Gertrude, who was born a Vanderbilt, and thus shared the brilliant life of two of America's illustrious and wealthy families. Yet of all the Vanderbilt blood down to Gloria—who has been artist, poet, designer, and writer of books and articles—Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney stands out for two reasons. First, she was undeniably a fine artist in her own right and a true student of painting and sculpture. Her own works are her own best advertisement, and they persist in America and abroad. But more than that, Gertrude did something that few men and women have ever accomplished: She established one of the most important of American art museums, and she did it basically with the assistance of only one person, and in a constant struggle against the tide of opinion of the movers and shakers of the art world.

There are others in the circle of wealth who have done much. Immediately the Guggenheims come to my mind, and Peggy Guggenheim in particular, for Peggy did a great deal for modern art, just as did Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. But Peggy's approach was considerably different; she belonged to an avant-garde of the literati and artistic worlds, and much of her encouragement was to young

Europeans. In the end, she tried the American scene and must have found it wanting. Indeed, she did, and moved herself and treasures to a Venetian palazzo, where she remained. The other Guggenheims have done a great deal for some modern artists, too, in the establishment of the Guggenheim Museum on New York's Fifth Avenue. And yet, there is a difference more pronounced here between the Guggenheims and their big museum, and the Whitneys and theirs. For Gertrude Whitney and those who have come after her in the management of the museum's affairs have not lost sight of the importance of the unknown—a good share of the Whitney budget yearly is directed to the encouragement of unknown American artists. Tastes change, ideas differ, but the Whitneys are faithful to Gertrude's love of experimentation for the sake of artistic value and betterment.

The artistic streak, then, runs strong in the Whitney family.

There is another strain that seems quite remarkable: entrepreneurial inventiveness. Eli Whitney was one of the most important characters of American history, because, as noted, he not only invented the cotton gin but the assembly line. His gin, in its very success, was a disaster for the South because it strengthened a way of life that might otherwise have died out without a sectional conflict that became civil war. The establishment of the assembly system also made it quite certain that the South would lose that war. The interchangeable musket parts he laid down on a table in the White House represented tremendous change.

The two Asas, in their own ways, were as important to the road of American history, because both were inventors by nature. The first Asa, with his wheels and refinements of the Baldwin locomotives, was a harbinger of rapid change in the railroad industry. Was not the second Asa perhaps more important in firmly implanting in the American mind the new idea that the whole continent could be tied together by transcontinental railroads? Of course, that idea would have to come sometime to someone, but it came early to Asa, at a time when most American railroads were what we would call shortline roads, built to serve a specific marketing and passenger area, built small, built by men whose vision or whose purses seemed limited.

In the history of American science there has seldom been much of a familial line; the nature of the pursuit of science is such that it demands a particular turn of mind. The Whitneys have shown a decided leadership in scientific attainment: the careers of Josiah Whitney and of Mary Whitney, as detailed here, and that of Josiah's brother William, as discussed incidentally, show how members of this family distinguished themselves at a time when there were not many scientists in America at all. Josiah's geology was not even recognized as a

science in America when he was looking about for a pursuit for himself in the early years, and he is one of the inventors of a whole area of academic interest. His brother became a philologist of note; and in the end both of them were applauded and recognized for their considerable accomplishments. Mary was lucky to have her interest in astronomy stimulated by Maria Mitchell, one of the very first American women to achieve anything in the scientific fields; Mary had opportunities, she seized them, and literally forced her way into the attention of the American scientific community by her own efforts and the recognition she received from important scientists in Europe. Mary's importance in the history of women and their struggle cannot be overestimated.

Harry Whitney, the explorer and hunter, showed a side of American life that was common in the early and middle years of the nineteenth century, but which has become less so as our society has progressed to industrialization and intensive population. Harry was an adventurer; in another period he might have been a freebooter or the builder of a great land empire. He had none of the characteristics of the industrialist. He disliked cities and heavy doses of people at one time. His was a strain of the American character that has had to be sublimated in the twentieth century as even our explorative ventures have become team operations. This Whitney was one of a vanishing breed and is noteworthy for it.

The most attention in the book has been given to the family and descendents of William C. Whitney, one of the Massachusetts line, who became politician, lawyer, businessman and one of the princes of American industry. He and his family typify this aspect of American society in some of its better facets. There was, of course, the Mauve Decade, and the glorious period of the 1890s when the princes of privilege did very much as they wished. But the Whitneys were not really of this stripe, although they liked the trappings and privileges of great wealth. Yet Harry Whitney in his time, and Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney in his, were both subjected to the strong discipline of strong fathers, and there is something to be learned from their stories. And in another aspect of the uses of wealth, John Hay Whitney and Joan Whitney Payson showed by their canny investment of money how well the Whitneys learned to survive in an ever-changing American society.

If this book were to be written a quarter of a century hence, it would have to be changed in many ways, for there are still Whitneys about—some of them yet not heard from, Whitneys of that line of John and Elinor's, descendents of those people who came to the New World seeking something they had either lost or not secured in the old. I, for one, am certain that more Whitneys will be heard from.

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